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**ALLERTON PARK INSTITUTE**  
**Number Eight**





# THE IMPACT OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES ACT: PROGRESS AND POTENTIAL

Papers presented at an Institute  
conducted jointly by the  
University of Illinois  
Graduate School of Library Science  
and the  
Library Services Branch,  
U. S. Office of Education  
November 5-8, 1961

*Edited with a Foreword  
by  
Donald E. Strout*

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## FOREWORD

In the belief that the Library Services Act is perhaps the most unique and far-reaching development to have occurred in librarianship in recent decades, the Graduate School of Library Science at the University of Illinois early in 1961 invited the Library Services Branch of the U. S. Office of Education (under whose aegis the LSA is administered) to co-sponsor an institute on the Act, to which would be invited representatives selected by the state library agencies throughout the United States and its outlying possessions. The result was the Allerton Park Institute on "The Impact of the Library Services Act--Progress and Potential," held on November 5-8, 1961, in the relaxed and informal atmosphere of Allerton Park, a University-owned country estate near Monticello, Illinois.

Presented herewith are the papers of the Institute, which is the eighth in an annual series on aspects of the current library scene. The content of earlier institutes has embraced such matters as school library supervision, collection building for the small and medium-sized public library, reference services, the role of classification, and collecting science literature for general reading.

The year of 1961 witnessed the end of the first five years of the Library Services Act and the beginning of the new five-year extension of the Act to June 30, 1966, as authorized by the 86th Congress in 1960. Thus the time seemed peculiarly appropriate for a close and critical look at the Act to date and a forecast of the years ahead, in terms of its effects upon governmental agencies and thinking, library development, and the library profession as a whole, at national, state, and local levels.

To this end, speakers were asked to range the full spectrum of theory and experience in their presentations, to cast an objective eye over the events of the past, and to voice a considered judgement on the course of the future. The roster of speakers, in turn, was selected on as wide a range as possible, to effect voices to represent the profession as a whole, the national and state operations level, and the field of political science.

Registration at the Institute totalled eighty-five. Represented were thirty-five states and Puerto Rico, the American Library Association and the Canadian Library Association,

the Library Services Branch, and the Graduate School of Library Science.

Here one must pause to express special thanks to the staff of the Extension Division of the University in whose capable hands is placed the responsibility of handling the myriad details of the institutes and conferences which are held at Allerton and elsewhere on and off the campus. Their help and support from the first days of planning straight through to the end of the Institute was invaluable.

Program planning for the Institute rested with a committee composed of John G. Lorenz and John C. Frantz of the Library Services Branch, and Harold Goldstein, J. Clement Harrison, Harold Lancour (ex officio), and Donald E. Strout of the Graduate School of Library Science.

In an event of this sort, it is obviously impossible to list by name those whose hands were ready and whose hearts were willing to push it forward. Such measure of success as the Institute realized lies, of course, in the first instance with the speakers and the registrants, who took time from busy schedules to sit apart, ponder, reflect, and share their thoughts and words with one another. Faculty colleagues at Illinois and members of the staff of the Library Services Branch, by their advice, help, encouragement, and participation, did much to further the course of the Institute.

The editor is particularly grateful to Esther Clausen, Documents Librarian of the University of Illinois, for her aid in guiding him through the intricacies of governmental organization. A word of special recognition is due R. Joanne Fields, Assistant to the Editor, Graduate School of Library Science, for her assistance and her execution of the tedious and time-consuming task of preparing typescript for photocopying. Last, but by no means least, a wife deserves more than passing mention when the hours she spends in helping to ready the papers in final form far exceeds the normal limits of uxorial patience and devotion.

Donald E. Strout  
Chairman, LSA Institute

Urbana, Illinois  
April 8, 1962

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## LSA AND LIBRARY STANDARDS: TWO SIDES OF THE COIN

Lowell A. Martin

We all know that the Library Services Act and new national standards for public libraries came on the scene about the same time. In a sense the standards established goals, and LSA provided fresh, new means to achieve goals. It is therefore natural after five years to compare aims with accomplishments.

A few disclaimers are in order at the outset. This will in no way be a definitive evaluation of the federally sponsored program. Its workings have reached into 50 states and three territories, hundreds of counties, and thousands of communities. Who would be hardy or foolhardy enough to pronounce judgment on this rich variety?

These are no more than impressions. I have read the reports of the state library agencies several times over, year by year, across the nation for each year, and across the board on specific topics. I have tried in the process to be both sympathetic and critical. In one way or another I have been able to see at first hand aspects of the LSA program in a dozen states. I have tried at all times to hold the national standards in my mind's eye, asking not only whether there was more library service but also what kind.

This has led to certain recurring impressions and questions. Not judgments. Not even conclusions. Impressions and questions.

Further, I am quite conscious of being a coach on the sidelines, not a runner in the race. The runner and his judge may have different standards. I thought of this recently when my son won the mile race in a college meet only to be met by the coach's sour comment that he was still under the school record.

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Lowell A. Martin is Vice President and  
Editorial Director, Grolier, Inc.

My point is that any comment on the achievement of LSA is a matter of viewpoint. One could say without hesitation that it has made for definite progress, a position which could hardly be challenged. But one could also say that LSA has definitely not led to achievement of national library standards across the country, and stand pat on that.

### Bench Marks in Judging LSA

Before trying to add up the score, we need a few bench marks--frames of reference I had better call them in a university setting--on which I believe we can agree. If we are going to judge LSA, we had better remind ourselves what it was set up to accomplish. Stripped to essentials, the aim has been to bring library service to many Americans in rural areas with no facilities and to raise the quality of service in many rural communities that clearly had substandard libraries.<sup>1</sup> It was hoped along the way to bring a new federal-state-local partnership into being, and to use federal funds to prime the pump for more state and local money.

And what in brief do the national standards envisage? The 70 guiding principles and the 191 standards come down to resources, personnel, and service able to meet the needs of an educated democracy under challenge, and to do this by means of coordinated units strong enough to come up to standards.<sup>2</sup>

I feel a responsibility to add a word here about my own personal viewpoint on the standards, and thus on the level which library service should achieve. One can think of the standards as eventual goals to be attained perhaps in the next 25 or 50 years. I think that will be too late. Too late for what? At most, too late to help preserve our way of life. At the very least, too late to maintain and expand the public library's position as an adult education agency. The national standards are not pie-in-the-sky which we might get to in some millenium, but necessary and indeed minimum and immediate requirements if that agency is not to slip into obscurity.

I am sure that some of you react by saying to yourself that I should see sections of your state, with no or very little library service, and I would not talk of achieving national standards in the near future. It is precisely because I have seen such areas that the urgency of rapid progress impresses itself upon me. And I need hardly remind this group that the national standards did not simply say that each separate community and library should by itself somehow pass a miracle and achieve high standards, but this is to be accomplished through library systems, coordinated intercommunity effort of many sizes and shapes.



One final bench mark. We are considering a four-year, \$75 million program aimed at over 70 million Americans. The \$75 million figure is the total of federal, state, and local funds that have gone into this national project. Four years rather than five should be used because no grants were made in the first six months after the federal legislation was passed, and a number of states did not enter until the second year.

### Advances Under the Federal Program

Has LSA brought service to rural people who lacked it; has it improved existing facilities in rural areas? Of course it has. Here is no more than a partial review of accomplishments.

✓ Local rural areas lacking library service have been given a start, from Halibut Cove, Alaska, to Orange County, Florida. Actually the figures here are more modest than one might expect. New libraries to serve a little under two million additional rural people have been created under the federal program. To this modest figure would have to be added the greater number of people who gained practical access to facilities which existed before 1956 but which were beyond their reach. If I were to turn the coin this early in the game, you could ask how much of this extension would have occurred anyway. But there can be no doubt that LSA gave an impetus to the extension movement both to unserved areas and to people living at a distance from central facilities, just when library extension on a national scale showed signs of running out of steam. To keep this matter in balance, we must remember that there still are over 20 million Americans, mostly in rural areas, without direct library service.

✓ New county libraries, and to some extent multicounty libraries, have been created under LSA. Once again the figures are moderate rather than spectacular. After three years, 65 counties and an equal number of New England towns in the continental United States had new service.<sup>3</sup> Some of these new county units have become parts of multicounty systems. Valid totals for multicounty units are not available, but the state reports indicate that they have been a regular feature. We are justified as we go forward in this evaluation in giving a good hard look at county units--not just new ones but older county libraries in the program--because they form the organizational base for the LSA enterprise.

✓ Guidance and training of local personnel by state agencies has been substantially increased. This has taken a rich variety of forms--from traditional field visits, to a remarkably large

number of district institutes, to the first real appearance on the national scene of state fellowships for professional study of library service. Here again, to keep the picture in balance, one must ask how much of this field training was directed to nonprofessional or part-time staff members, some of whom may already have left library service. But this is simply to say that these programs have had to work with existing human resources.

Interlibrary loan and reference facilities for all libraries, another state service, have also been noticeably strengthened.

While this service is not so visible or dramatic as new bookmobiles following the back roads, it is nonetheless an important element in the state structure of service. Indeed, as I have studied state programs, more than once I have wondered idly whether we really need to go through the travail of regional organization, whether strong state collections and reference staffs, coupled with the wonders of present-day communication, would not more directly provide the elements of a library system--that is, a local outlet with most-used materials backed up by a central collection from which materials as needed can be rushed to the locality on short notice. Perhaps this dream of an efficient and simple order must be abandoned when we recall the strategic importance of a collection of some depth to which better readers should have direct access. Be that as it may, book collections at the state level have been increased by several million volumes, and there are now after five years approximately twice as many staff members to get these books out into the state. The backstopping function of the state agencies has been strengthened, and this is no small accomplishment.

LSA has stimulated the provision of increased funds for library service at the state level. Of course there sometimes has been some pretty fancy financial juggling to enable states to match federal funds. On the other hand, federal funds and resulting programs may well have been a factor in the first provision of state aid to public libraries in at least six states and in substantial state aid increases in others. State appropriations for rural library service almost doubled from 1956 to 1961, from \$6 million to \$11 million. Certainly the argument cannot be advanced against LSA that it dried up state financial provision, that the states simply shifted the burden to rich Uncle Sam. The effect on provision of local funds is less clear. The figures for a definite conclusion on this point are not available, because the "local" funds reported by the U. S. Office of Education are only those monies used to match the federal grants within states. It is interesting to note that the program is now financed on a 35-45-20 basis as between federal, state, and local contributions.

One of the unanswered questions is whether the federal grants and state appropriations have stimulated commensurate local funds or whether they have in part replaced local funds.

There have been many other accomplishments under LSA, tangible and intangible. ✓ Centralized processing has sprouted. Broad public relations programs have appeared. A workable partnership among the federal, state, and local levels of government has taken hold. Among the less tangible results, I would cite the growing spirit of purpose, of optimism, of accomplishment among state extension workers.

A special word should be given to the high quality of the administration of the Act by the Library Services Branch of the national government. I will content myself here simply by saying that there has been a nice combination of leadership and cooperation, of high purpose and flexibility, of light stepping among red tape.

### Further Analysis of the LSA Program

For purposes of further discussion, let me now reduce these many developments to three broad headings, which together reflect the overall thrust of the program:

- 1/ ✓ LSA has strengthened state library agencies.
- 2/ ✓ It has stimulated extension of service in the traditional pattern, by means of bookmobiles and county libraries.
- 3/ ✓ It has fostered experimentation with new forms of library systems, designed to improve rather than to extend service.

It is not by accident that I put the strengthening of state agencies first. Has it occurred to you what a gamble was taken in LSA from the beginning in depending on state library agencies for this program? I know that there have been a few strong agencies at the state level for some years. But the picture five or more years ago in state after state was not just one of some shortage of staff or some weakness in collection, but of downright deficiencies which made the state the weak link in the proposed chain of library development. The state agencies--including the weak state agencies--met the challenge. And of course this means that in the beginning the one or very few senior state library officers rose to the occasion. What human stories of gathering of forces, of downright hard work in the small hours there must be behind this magnificent response! Then I meet with you state people here, wondering if the campaign has ground you down, and I find on the contrary that you look fit as can be and ready for more.

What I am trying to say is that in my view the achievement under LSA which is least open to challenge is the strengthening of the state level of library service in this country. Yes, more important than bookmobiles, more important than the county libraries, more important than the increased money as such. I know that staffs are still short, that collections have weaknesses, that many a midnight you find yourself driving back home over lonely roads. But we begin to have state library agencies equal to the responsibilities our fine plans have placed upon them from the crop of statewide blueprints in the thirties, to the National Plan of the forties, to the recent standards.

I do not say this to be flattering in any way. However, I do hope you will remember this opinion of state personnel as I go on to discuss library extension and county libraries, parts of which will be neither flattering nor complimentary.

### An Old or a New Pattern?

In substance, in the bulk of its activity, the LSA program falls under the second and third headings above. It is an extension program, the provision of facilities where they were lacking and of better facilities where they were weak. In my view, a fundamental question in evaluating LSA thus far is the extent to which its primary effect has been over on the side of traditional extension by means of bookmobiles and county or multicounty libraries, or over on the side of emerging forms of regional organization which hold some promise of bringing service up to national standards.

To what extent has LSA been more of the same, ending up in clearly substandard facilities? To what extent has it opened a new road toward better library facilities? Is it the end of the old or the start of the new?

No final answers can be given to these questions at this stage. It is in this regard that I have had recurring impressions as I studied the state reports. I offer them here for what they may be worth, and with a reminder again that it is precisely here that the viewpoint of the observer colors his conclusions.

When there are people without library resources, we know from standards that we ideally would like to provide two levels of facility--the strong central library with collection and staff in depth, and branches or bookmobiles to bring some part of library resources close to people. In real life, because of limited funds, we must often choose between these two.

The evidence shows that under LSA the prevailing choice has been the provision of a small part of library service in a



nearby location. This is what library extension has meant for 50 years. Fragmentation and convenience. Before roads and automobiles they were achieved in the village library. Now they are achieved with the bookmobile.

I feel justified in the statement that bookmobile-type extension has comprised the largest single activity in the LSA program. Over 250 bookmobiles have been purchased,<sup>4</sup> stocked, staffed, and put on the road--now for two or more years in many cases. Remember that there is a little under \$60 million of federal and state money involved (the remainder of the \$75 million coming from local sources). Over \$5 million would be needed to purchase and stock these mobile units, at least an equal sum each year to staff and operate them, plus time of central staff and overhead. A conservative estimate is that one-third of the federal and state money has gone into the bookmobile program.

These mobile units of course have been used in a variety of ways--as direct service units of state agencies, as demonstrations in unserved areas, as a means for getting out into rural areas by established county libraries.

In short, while other community services are using roads and automobiles to bring people in to facilities that achieve standards, we often are using the road and the automobile to bring substandard service out to people. They are using increased funds to build a wing on the central unit (whether hospital, church, or school) or to add special personnel (whether the anaesthetist in the hospital or the guidance counselor in the school)--that is, to come closer to quality standards. We are using increased funds to buy a bookmobile and hire a bookmobile attendant--that is, to come closer to accessibility standards.

I don't want to repeat this ad nauseam, but let me say it just once more: we are in the stage of extension, putting our time and money into taking fragmented library service out to people; other educational and community facilities are in the stage of consolidation, putting their time and money into bringing people in to stronger central resources.

### Role of County Libraries

I am sure that you are anxious to turn the coin back to the right side. What is on the other side? The county library. The bookmobile, you no doubt are thinking, is based on the county library and draws sustenance from it. Those people who want to get in their automobiles and go into a county library headquarters may do so just as they go to the district hospital or the supermarket or the consolidated school.

All right, then let's look at the county library. You recall that it is one of the main vehicles for action under LSA.

I suddenly realized recently that I have lived with a quarter century of county libraries. I went to library school in the 1930's. Carleton Joeckel was pushing the larger-unit concept. The many WPA and PWA state library plans of the 30's were based on systems of county libraries. I know that for a considerable period I simply assumed that the county, being larger than the village, was the answer to the problem of organizing effective library systems.

My first contacts with county units confirmed this hope--in the metropolitan counties such as Cuyahoga and Wayne, and in the well-conceived California county libraries. But then I delved a little deeper in state after state--first in the 30's, then after the war, recently in several state studies. This proved to be a disillusioning experience.

Now county libraries are of course by no means all the same. They differ as much as municipal libraries. But for hundreds of them, conceivably for more than a thousand of them, this thumbnail sketch holds true: a collection only a little stronger than a small-town library but not as strong as a small-city library, one professional librarian whose time and attention are spread from dealing with the county commissioners to dealing with the janitor, one or more bookmobiles. The bookmobile, incidentally, is as likely as not to make a major portion of its stops at schools. Is this a library system providing standard-level service?

If the county is sparsely settled and the county seat quite small, the county library may serve all or most of the county, including the town in which headquarters is located. In many of the somewhat more populous counties, where the city library or libraries were first established, the county unit is separate and serves the areas outside the cities. In these cases the county library is not a larger unit in the sense of an agency covering all of an area and unifying or simplifying the service structure. Rather, it is another library on the scene, in many instances another weak library.

Are the county libraries used under the LSA program of this substandard type? I do not have the evidence on which to base a statistical answer. But if county units have been weak, and LSA had to start with what was there, it follows that such units have formed an important base of operations. It is almost by definition the more sparsely-settled counties in which the newest units have been established during these five years, the more populous having organized earlier. While in some cases

the new county library is integrated with pre-existing city units, in city-county libraries--an added wing built on a strong foundation--this combination is rare enough to be noted as exceptional in the various state reports.

Some of you, who may share my concern about the emphasis upon extension and about the shortcomings of county libraries, probably feel that I have lost touch with the political reality of the situation. How does one develop support for a service, among both voters and legislators, except by bringing it close to people and making it tangible to them? And how else can this be done except with bookmobiles and county libraries? With this start, you may say, we can then build toward fine standard libraries. I know of the appeal of the bookmobile. That it necessarily has more appeal than a strong central unit open to rural people I do not know. We seem to be saying that there is something different about library service--in contrast to other community services--that necessitates this extension emphasis. What is different, we seem to assume, is that this is the one service that rural people will not use unless it is brought very close to them, an assumption which needs testing before an extension system is built on it.

Has the strategy of starting with people where they are, giving them a fragment of library service conveniently as a first step, actually put us on the road to standard-level support for county libraries? For those county libraries organized in the past five years it is too soon to say. A few have caught hold of the state-sponsored demonstrations and now support them at a good level. Some county demonstrations have continued under local support but, according to the state reports, at a discernibly reduced financial level. And by looking carefully at the reports it becomes clear that in some states certain demonstration areas did not respond to the bait and turned down or failed to act on a county library tax.

On a national scale the figures for financial support of extension-type county libraries raise some questions. Some of you have heard me make the point that county libraries in Pennsylvania have lower per capita support than town libraries, which in turn have less support than city libraries. I made a similar calculation recently for my home state of New Jersey and once again find that county libraries--these agencies established many years ago by Sara Askew in high hopes for the future--are significantly below the separate town and city libraries in per capita support. It would be worth a careful national check on my hypothesis that the county libraries, other than in metropolitan counties, have on the average drawn less support than the more

local units. I know that there are many reasons for this, particularly the limited tax base when the city library and the county library stand separate, but such support certainly does not provide a foundation for library service remotely approaching the national standards.

### The Multicounty Library

It is because many state library workers share this concern about the rural county library that almost one-half of the original state plans under LSA referred to the multicounty or regional units in one form or another, and others have experimented with such units even if they don't appear as such in the formal plans. For the most part the larger unit above the county has meant the multicounty library, with anywhere from two to seven or eight counties. Some of these may well have put themselves on the road toward quality service.

But I have an uneasy feeling that we might be caught in a numbers game. One county is not enough to provide the necessary population and tax base, so we add another substandard county. Two prove to be little if any better, so more are added. In the back of our minds is some such figure as 100,000 population as desirable. This numbers game can be just that--a gamble that does not pay off. I can readily conceive of a reasonably good county library serving 25,000 or 50,000 people that will actually be weakened by taking on several sparsely-settled counties. As we add counties we are adding one of the most expensive factors in library service--distance--and particularly expensive when the standard to which we give first priority is that of bringing facilities close to people.

Adding rooms to the house will improve it only if the foundation is strong. Whenever I hear of a multicounty library--which is a library like any other library except that it has the added load of distance and a more complicated governmental structure--I ask first to see the central unit, the foundation, the core of strength. Does it have a subject collection with depth, does it have a staff of professionals specialized in the several major aspects of library service? In substance, does it achieve to any reasonable extent these obvious--and not-very-fancy--national standards? Or is it just a larger substandard library? I am sure that some of the multicounty units used under LSA do have a sound foundation. But when I hear of a library covering several counties, with a limited population, and responsible for 15,000 square miles, I feel that judgment must be reserved.



## Questions About National Program

Remember where we are in this discussion. I have said that the improvement in state library agencies is an unquestioned gain. Beyond that, the great thrust of LSA has been in library extension and county and regional units. If they show strength, LSA has moved us toward standards. If not, we are confronted with some solemn questions about the national program.

Note that I say questions--not necessarily conclusions. I do not feel that I know the situation in 50 states well enough to pronounce upon these points and set down a categorical judgment. But the very asking of the questions, along with any qualified answers that can be given at this stage, should serve to show the other side of the coin. I purposely put these questions in an extreme form, if for no other reason than to test ourselves to see if we can answer them.

✓ To the extent that LSA has meant starting service where it has been lacking, have substantial amounts of federal and state aid gone precisely to those areas that did not help themselves? Has this to any significant degree been a program for helping the stragglers who didn't care enough about library service to provide it for themselves? One can understand a federal and state aid program to assist districts which have tried but simply lack the local means to bring library service up to a reasonable standard. But what of those districts that over the 50 or 75 years of the public library movement took no steps to provide service even within their means? And what of those that have poor service simply because they did not choose to make the financial effort of their neighbors?

Now I know that this extreme position must be qualified. Some localities are really pauper poor. Others face special circumstances. Some just didn't happen to be blessed with that civic-minded leadership that gets an agency like the library started and keeps it developing, and had to wait until the recent federal-state program finally brought such leadership into play.

Granting all this, we do have to ask ourselves whether a considerable piece of money and effort has gone into rather rocky ground. And the going can get rockier in the next five years.

Which leads to a second major question. ✓ If the LSA program has stressed convenience of service to people who were unwilling to make a little effort to get it, has there consequently been less progress than we have a right to expect in making provision for whatever percentage of rural people need, seek, and would use a collection of definite scope and the specialized

services of professional librarians? I know that many rural people tonight, as a result of LSA, are reading a library book rather than a magazine or a paperback. I wish I were equally sure that the collection from which they made their choice and the aid provided them by qualified reading-guidance personnel have led them to reading something more significant than the magazine or the paperback.

Another question which grows out of this line of thought, or maybe a variation on the same question, is whether the net result of LSA thus far could be to add to the number of people getting substandard library service in the country. It would require a vast national study to balance the ledger with any accuracy. It is certainly to be hoped that some rural libraries have really been brought up to standard in these five years. Many more have moved closer to standard. But the record indicates that a substantial number of very weak county libraries remain and some new ones have been added. I would like to think that on balance there has been a reduction of substandard units. But I don't know. And the very fact that the record is not clear, four years and \$75 million later, is food for thought.

If one reads the state reports critically, a curious repetition of 50 years of library history in these five years becomes apparent, as though an historical pageant was being reenacted. In the first act of the pageant, there are localities entirely without library facilities, and the state comes on the scene to correct the situation. In the pre-LSA version, the locality was encouraged to establish a local library, often a weak library. In the LSA version, it is not the fragment of library service in the form of the village library that is used; it is the fragment in the form of the bookmobile. The second act, if local units already exist, is devoted to the county library--and I have said this is often a disappointing part of the drama. The third act is the multicounty or regional library. This act is not finished. Its outcome, in my view, will depend more on the strength of the service center on which it is based than on the size of territory or population served. Possibly the analogy of a three-act drama is not appropriate--perhaps these are simply successive rungs on a ladder.

Now my question is whether the historical drama must be replayed, whether the best way to the top is up a ladder that has not yet led to standard library service. We speak, quite properly, of the high level of the California system. I am struck by the fact that California 50 years ago skipped act one, and in many instances went directly to the county library. But for the rest of the country there was a trap in this California

surge forward. It was reasoned that if California could move ahead by adopting the county as a base, then others too would use the county. But there was a catch. The average California county is almost three times as large as the average county in other states--and California today is the most rapidly-growing state in terms of population.

New York provides another but quite different example of a new script, not bound by the three historical acts. New York started like other states, with the usual emphasis upon local libraries and in time it had some of the best and some of the worst public libraries in the country. It seemed as though New York would go through the usual lockstep, and it actually began a weak second act devoted to the county library. But then the pattern was broken, several rungs on the ladder were skipped. Before LSA, and with added impetus under LSA, New York struck out for coordinating library systems, covering anything from parts of counties to several counties. The units established are not there to provide more extension but to strengthen what extension already exists. Today New York presents a most interesting library phenomenon--it is our most populous state; yet it is now almost covered with the smallest number of systems. Get out your old National Plan for Public Libraries. New York is the only state that has got down close to the number of library systems proposed there within the several major regions.<sup>5</sup> Most other states actually have more libraries today than 15 years ago.

One might interpret what I have been saying as an accusation that the state plans have not considered good library standards. This would be unfair. By actual count, 34 of the original plans mention the National Standards<sup>6</sup> explicitly, and others clearly imply standards at this level. More than just mentioning standards on paper, most state agency people, I am convinced, have had reasonable criteria of achievement in mind.

Standards were clearly in the picture at the outset. But they have faded into the background in the state reports on the results of the first five years. Every state report displays optimism and enthusiasm for accomplishments to date. Yet only a handful of reports--not more than five or six--bring standards into the description of results after four or five years. Some may assume, without expressing it, an idea put neatly in one of the summaries--the belief that units established "show definite promise to grow toward maturity."

Perhaps here is the keynote I was asked to present. This has been a youthful period, these five years under LSA. Active, exciting, sometimes misdirected, yet withal promising as youth. Maturity may well be the goal in these next five years. That

would certainly be a record--to go through youth and into maturity in 10 years.

### New Patterns

I am not going to dwell upon my third major point of progress under LSA in new patterns of larger library organization, other than to say that there has been experimentation, and that in my view some of these new forms hold more promise for quality library service in the next five years than primary dependence on county or multicounty units. I have already mentioned the library centers in New York. California is not resting on its relatively strong county units, but is moving on with new patterns such as the North Bay Cooperative Library System. My own current contact with the Enoch Pratt Free Library, and its interlibrary and reference service for county libraries over the state of Maryland, is still another example of new forms of library coordination which takes a discernible step toward better standards. I cannot but conclude that the \$65,000 a year put into this facility, which strengthens the central county facilities available to every resident of the state, is money better spent than if it were put into two or three bookmobiles. Centralized processing fits into this pioneer fringe of new library forms. And, to my mind, one of the most promising and not necessarily new forms is the building of county units upon strong city libraries--the possibilities of which I hope can be fully opened by adjustments in the unreal urban-rural distinction that has existed in the federal act. I am pleased to see that the Library Services Branch is fostering studies of these various experiments, to help additional states adopt or adapt them.

### The Second Five Years of LSA

The next five years provide an opportunity to move from youth to maturity. Growing up always involves some hard decisions. Here are some of the hardest that are inherent in the situation as I see it:

1. to re-dedicate ourselves to national standards, which often have become lost in the hard reality of these first five years;
2. to decide whether we will continue to select one standard, accessibility and convenience of service, or whether depth and substance will be moved into first place;
3. to build our foundations first, to add to strength rather than combine weakness, even if this means that we will not start as many new library units in these next



- five years;
4. to think twice and twice again before getting caught in the treadmill of starting weak county libraries, and then compounding the mistake by adding more weak counties;
5. to look freshly and imaginatively at the possibilities for new forms of coordination so that we will consolidate our strength rather than extend our weakness.

I have one further and final thought about state library activities in these next five years. We all know that libraries are part of the educational system. In our governmental structure, education is the responsibility basically of the state government. We have found various advantages in local administration of education both in schools and libraries. But in schools we have come increasingly to recognize that the state cannot say it has the responsibility for education, pass this responsibility off to local units, and then look the other way when sub-standard facilities are maintained. State school agencies are beginning to demand as well as encourage a sound standard of local facility.

For two generations it has been the byword of state library agencies that they are supplementary groups which will seek to help with local facilities if asked to do so. I think the time is coming when state educational agencies, for libraries as well as for schools, will be expected to see that localities maintain adequate local facilities. This does not mean state dictation, nor does it mean taking over administration, but it is more than waiting to be asked to help. I think increasingly the state will set standards, will see that these standards are understood by those responsible at the local level for this educational service, will help localities achieve them, and with great regret but nonetheless with high resolve will step in to see that facilities are brought up to a proper level when certain localities lag behind. Which I suppose is a fancy way of saying--the state will withhold aid funds if localities do not do their share.

When the federal act was passed, just when new national standards were formulated, I said that this opened the prospect of a new era of library development. Has this happened in the first five years? You recognize from my remarks that I cannot give an unqualified "yes." There has been too much attention to old forms and methods, which we know did not lead to a sound standard of service. But let us hope these traditional efforts have enabled us to catch up. There has been vitality throughout the five-year program, and there has been experimentation.

There is momentum, and not necessarily in the same old rut. I still think LSA can usher in a new era in public library development in this country. In fact, having now spent a few hours with state library personnel, I am convinced it will.

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## LSA, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND THE PROFESSION

Germaine Krettek

Preparing this paper has been a delightful task but also a frustrating experience. In reading background material on federal aid for libraries, in talking to Ralph Dunbar and Paul Howard, who were deeply involved in all stages of the events leading up to the LSA, I've unearthed so much fascinating material that I could write a book. This is the pleasant part.

I'm sorry I couldn't talk to Marjorie Malmberg and Julia Bennett Armistead also since they, too, played important roles and deserve much of the credit for the success that finally came. But it is impossible to mention all who shared in this achievement. Hundreds helped in their own particular way. Many who helped are here.

The difficulty confronting me is that I have only a few minutes in which to cover the development of federal legislation, the work of the Washington Office, and the outlook for the future. However, many of you here took an active part in the early struggles and are familiar with much of the history leading up to the LSA. Furthermore someone has already written a book and I hope all of you have read it--Hawthorne Daniel's Public Libraries for Everyone.<sup>1</sup> But even so, some of the early history of library legislation needs to be told here in order to place developments in proper perspective. My task then will be to consider the development of legislation which eventually became the Library Services Act and to try to assess the factors which brought success in 1956 and again in 1960 when the Act was extended, as well as the implications of such factors for future library legislation.

For almost 30 years recommendations have been made<sup>7</sup> for federal assistance to public libraries. One of the earliest

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proposals came from outside the library profession. Representative Ross Collins of Mississippi introduced a bill in the 1930's to set up regional branches of the Library of Congress, saying that for the cost of one destroyer branches could be established in several regions of the United States.

In 1936 the American Library Association's Special Committee on Federal Aid recommended "a system of permanent annual grants-in-aid to libraries," with emphasis on state programs and development of facilities for rural library service.<sup>2</sup>

In 1938 President Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Education recommended federal grants-in-aid to the states for the extension of library service to rural areas. It proposed appropriations of \$2 million in 1940, \$4 million in 1941, and \$6 million annually thereafter, to be allocated among the states in proportion to their rural populations.<sup>3</sup> A study made for the Committee by Carleton B. Joeckel presented basic arguments for federal aid to libraries with recommendations for a permanent system of grants-in-aid.<sup>4</sup>

The arguments advanced for federal participation have consistently stressed the significance of the public library as an essential part of our educational system, have pointed out the lacks and inadequacies in library service and the inability or unwillingness of the states and local communities to provide the necessary financing, and have concluded that a program national in scope is necessary to achieve the goal of good library service for all citizens.

Based on findings from the studies made by the U. S. Advisory Committee on Education, federal-aid-to-education bills including a separate title to provide grants for libraries in rural areas were introduced in 1939 and 1940. No action was taken by the Congress, however, and then national defense and later war activities caused a postponement of any consideration of such measures.

During the war years ALA's Federal Relations Committee tried to carry forward its objective of permanent federal aid for library development, and at the same time to take advantage of opportunities to secure emergency funds to provide for library service in training for defense industries or in civic education. The U. S. Office of Education, after a conference with leading librarians on this problem of extending public library service through state and local library agencies to defense areas, prepared and documented a budget of some \$14 million. This was approved by the Federal Security Administration but was not allowed by the Bureau of the Budget on the grounds the WPA was already engaged in rendering library service to these areas!



In 1944 a bill was prepared by the ALA to provide for the transfer of surplus army books, materials, and equipment to the states. Included in this bill were many of the same provisions later incorporated in the Library Demonstration Bill and the LSA. Carl Milam, then Executive Secretary of ALA, tried without success to interest Senator Elbert D. Thomas of Utah and Representative Graham Barden of North Carolina in sponsoring the bill. This failure was due largely to the fact there was no one from ALA in Washington to follow through, although Ralph M. Dunbar, then head of the Library Service Division of the USOE, was a participant in all these activities insofar as government regulations permitted. It also reflected the pressure of war activities which made it difficult to get the full interest of the congressmen on the bill.

In 1945 ALA established its Washington Office, with Paul J Howard, who had been serving as Chairman of the Federal Relations Committee, as the first director. With the assistance of a secretary and a public relations assistant, it was his job to organize the country, gain support of other national organizations, get state legislative committees set up, and inaugurate liaison with members of Congress. In those early days it was hard for ALA's representative to get past the reception desk of a congressman's office. So far as the representatives and senators were concerned, librarians and libraries were not important: librarians had no political influence, no appeal of consequence; libraries were for old people and children and of no significance nationally. In addition there was latent opposition in Congress and among many groups to federal aid in any form, plus a feeling that libraries were a concern of state and local governments and not a federal responsibility. The congressmen who supported the library bill when it was first introduced did so out of the goodness of their hearts--their support was pure philanthropy. Now these same senators and representatives who are still in Congress can take personal satisfaction in their action, which accomplished far more than they ever envisioned. A tremendous reservoir of good will has been built up in this influential group.

The library profession can be proud that grants for library service were included in the early general education bills, but more important is the fact that the American Library Association had the courage to try for separate library legislation when it became apparent that an omnibus education bill was going to face tremendous difficulties. Time has borne out the wisdom of that decision; the Library Services Act was not only passed but was extended for another five years, while a general education

bill has yet to be enacted by Congress. Both of these accomplishments have astonished and mystified many people, including some librarians and government officials, who can't understand how a library bill was passed while other educational measures failed.

One of the helpful factors in these accomplishments was the establishment of the ALA Washington Office.<sup>5</sup> In the beginning the Washington Office was supported through the Library Development Fund, consisting of gifts from individuals, state library associations, and ALA divisions, plus some money from general ALA funds. It was not until 1952 that the Office became a part of the regular ALA budget, and since then it has not had to solicit funds for its support. Contributions are still made by state library associations, however, and these funds enable the Office to do many things which would not be possible otherwise. From 1952 until early this year, when an assistant director was secured, the staff consisted of only two people--a director and a secretary.

The original Office was in downtown Washington at 1701 M Street, but was later located over Sidney Kramer's bookstore on H Street. In 1950 it was moved to Capitol Hill to a suite in the Hotel Congressional. After Congress bought that hotel in 1958, the Office was transferred two blocks east to the Coronet Apartment where it now occupies a three-room suite. The location of the Office is an important factor in lobbying. It is only a few blocks from the U. S. Capitol; the two House of Representatives office buildings are only a block away, and the two Senate buildings about five blocks. This is helpful because many congressmen must be visited and committee staff consulted every day while Congress is in session. Each of these buildings is one block square and has from four to seven floors, and all of these corridors are walked regularly.

Since the establishment of the Office, in every Congress from the 79th in 1945-46 through the 84th in 1955-56--the session in which the Library Services Act was passed--legislation providing grants for libraries in rural areas was introduced and promoted with varying degrees of success. The first in a long procession of bills to be introduced was a library demonstration measure sponsored by Congresswoman Emily Taft Douglas in the 79th Congress. I suppose it was largely because ALA was located in Chicago that Carl Milam suggested Illinois Congresswoman Douglas as a sponsor for the first bill. Simultaneously, Senator Lister Hill introduced in the Senate a similar bill at the request of Lois Green, who was then State Librarian of Alabama. By the time of adjournment, the House bill had

been reported favorably by the Education Subcommittee but not by the full Committee. The Senate bill was reported out by the full Committee on Labor and Public Welfare but did not reach the Senate floor.

After this fairly auspicious beginning, the vicissitudes were many. Representative Thomas Jenkins' bill in the next Congress received only favorable subcommittee action, but Senators Hill and George D. Aiken brought their bill through to Senate passage under the Unanimous Consent Calendar. Republican Senator Aiken became a sponsor because of what the bookmobile was doing in rural Vermont. Though the bill came to naught in this 80th Congress, by a series of curious incidents it did win one ardent advocate that it didn't have before. At the time he introduced the measure, Congressman Jenkins of Ohio was somewhat less than wildly enthusiastic about the program. Indeed, he had never heard of the American Library Association and had sponsored the measure only at the request of his law partner, a trustee in an Ohio public library. He was rather interested to know that there was such an association and a need for such legislation. But what really galvanized him into wholehearted support was an incident at the hearing on the bill. Appearing in support of the legislation with Ohio State Library's Walter Brahm at his side to testify, he was astonished and angered to hear committee member Ralph Gwinn of New York remark that "no responsible state official would support a bill of this nature." Piqued by his fellow-congressman's statement, Representative Jenkins became a firm backer of federal aid for library extension.

The 81st Congress saw four bills introduced in the House, a favorable report by the Education and Labor Committee, and then after five full hours of debate--defeat on the floor by a heartbreaking vote of 161-164. The Senate again reported the Library Demonstration Bill, co-sponsored now by three senators, but this time it was passed over on the Consent Calendar.

In the 82nd Congress, as a result of the debate in the preceding Congress, a number of changes were made in the legislation before introduction. The states were given greater freedom of action in carrying out the objectives of the bill; they were not restricted to the demonstration method. The bill became the Library Services Bill and included, among other things, a definite statement as to the possible maximum cost. It had a variable matching formula not in the earlier bills which took into consideration (1) the ratio of the rural population in each state to the total rural population of the United States and (2) the ability to pay in the respective states. In the House eight

members introduced identical bills, and Senators Hill, Aiken, and Douglas introduced the legislation in the Senate. Although favorably reported on by the full committee in the Senate and by the subcommittee in the House, the great pressure of other legislation prevented action.

Although no floor action occurred in the 82nd Congress, the bill was gathering that momentum which was to bring it success two Congresses later. Thirteen representatives and nine senators sponsored the measure in the 83rd Congress. Unfortunately this was to no avail, as the Senate and House committees this time held up all legislation which dealt with federal grants-in-aid to education. Their reason for doing this was anticipation of a report on the role of the federal government in education. This document, the so-called Kestnbaum Report,<sup>6</sup> prepared for the U. S. Commission on Intergovernmental Relations and issued in June 1955, considered libraries in this context and found that public libraries were an important part of our education system, that their work and expansion should be encouraged, but that their support was a state and local responsibility and that there was not such a compelling national interest involved as to justify action by the federal government.

Nevertheless, the successful climax came in the 84th Congress. With 28 similar bills introduced in the House, H. R. 2840 was favorably reported on July 29, 1955, and passed by the House on May 8, 1956. In the Senate, Senator Lister Hill introduced a similar bill for himself and 17 other senators. The Senate subcommittee acted on H. R. 2840, which, as passed by the House, was similar to the Senate bill, and reported it favorably on May 29, 1956. It passed the Senate on June 6, 1956, and was signed into law by the President on June 19, 1956, to become Public Law 84-597. A resolution of thanks was adopted at the Miami Conference of ALA and transmitted to President Eisenhower and the Congress.

The accomplishments of the Library Services Act have been spectacular. They are now a matter of printed record<sup>7</sup> to which you may refer, although many of you through actual experience know the record by heart. The House Appropriations Committee in recommending the full authorization for the Library Services Act for fiscal 1962 made this statement:

For the small amount of Federal funds involved this has been not only one of the most popular, but one of the most worthwhile programs of the Federal Government. Since this program was instituted, over 100 rural counties and an equal number of New England towns formerly without



any public libraries are now receiving library service. More than 6,000,000 books and other informational materials have been added to the resources of rural communities. This has not been done just with the Federal funds. This program is a fine demonstration of Federal leadership, and the local interest and contributions that can result from such leadership. Since this program started State funds for the development of rural public library service have increased 75% and local appropriations for rural libraries have increased 50%.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the greatest testimony to the success with which the grants have been managed was the extension of the Act by the 86th Congress in 1960, a year before its termination date necessitated such action. Not that its progress toward this end was without setbacks! Introduced auspiciously in January 1960 with 52 individual bills in the House and 55 co-sponsors in the Senate and reported unanimously by the House Committee on Education and Labor--an astonishing achievement--the House bill struck a snag when the Rules Committee refused to grant a rule. Meanwhile the Senate had passed the bill without a dissenting vote. With this tremendous show of support in both houses, after a moment or two of discouragement, it seemed worthwhile to seek ways to skirt the Rules Committee. To bypass the powerful Rules Committee is not easy. Speaking of the Rules Committee and its long-time Chairman, Howard Smith of Virginia, Paul Howard tells me that he is the only congressman who refused to see or talk to him about the library bill. This unfortunate attitude is somewhat offset, however, by the fact that the State Librarian of Mississippi is a personal friend of the second ranking majority member of the Rules Committee (referred to in the press as "H. Smith's spear carrier"), and she can sometimes get this important member to vote for library legislation.

But to get back to the summer of 1960. First, we had to find out what happened in the closed meeting of the Rules Committee at which the LSA amendment was considered. We learned the vote was a tie--6 to 6--and we also learned that the dissenting votes were cast by the four Republicans and the two above-mentioned ranking Democrats. After exhausting every means of getting a reconsideration of the bill by the Rules Committee, we decided to try to get a favorable vote under Suspension of the Rules--another difficult procedure.

It was fortunate for us that Congress recessed on July 2 instead of adjourning as had been expected. Representative John Fogarty of Rhode Island, Chairman of the Health, Educa-

tion, and Welfare Appropriations Subcommittee, stayed up all night on July 2 when it was uncertain whether the House would adjourn sine die or recess temporarily. At 5:30 a.m. he obtained the consent of Speaker Rayburn to call up the library extension bill under Suspension of the Rules on August 22.

The recess gave us time to marshal our forces, and we learned that librarians have powerful influence, friends in high places, and are willing to work day and night to accomplish something they believe in. Also helpful was the fact that ALA testified at the 1960 platform hearings of both national political parties, which led to the statements of support for libraries subsequently appearing in both party platforms. This in itself is a notable accomplishment--few organizations are given the opportunity to present their views at these platform hearings.

When the list of bills was made up by the Speaker for consideration on August 22, the Library Services Act was third on the list. This was lucky since only six bills were considered that day, and this was the only time the Suspension Calendar was called up before final adjournment. The Senate-passed bill, S.2830, was called up by Subcommittee Chairman Elliott since the House bill was still tied up in the Rules Committee. Frank Bow, Representative of Ohio, immediately opposed consideration and the debate was on.

I wish all of you could have been in the gallery that August afternoon--not so much to hear what was said as how it was said; to witness the timing of statements by Republicans and Democrats, the stature of the men who spoke, the inflection in their voices, and the reception of their remarks by the House members.

At the end of 40 exciting, thrilling, nerve-wracking minutes, Speaker Rayburn banged his gavel; the vote was taken. Mr. Bow demanded a division; 190 representatives stood up in favor of the bill, 29 opposed it. And so the Library Services Act was extended until June 30, 1966, as Public Law 86-679.

Over the past three decades the changes in attitudes of librarians, congressmen, government officials, and the general public have been truly amazing. As you well know, there has been divided opinion in the American Library Association on the question of federal aid to libraries, and much has been written on the subject. One of the biggest battles took place at the Denver Conference in 1935. In the beginning many library leaders were opposed to the idea; some actively fought it; many believed a bill would never pass. The interests of many librarians did not extend beyond their own libraries. Some librarians, however, supported such legislation because

they felt that the profession should stick together, even if they were not sold personally on the objectives of the legislation. It took years to build up grass roots support, but it was effective in the long run. The lengthy educational process and the success of the legislation, plus the solid achievements under the Library Services Act, have done more than anything else to make the library profession a national group that now speaks with considerable authority throughout the country as well as in the nation's capital. The success of the legislation has also brought prestige to the ALA in the eyes of other national organizations.

In the Office of Education there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm for the library bill during the early years, with the exception of a small core of officials who were deeply interested in the cause of libraries. But most officials were convinced that the library bill would get no place, that it wasn't worth wasting time on--and then were always amazed each time the bill got a hearing and a favorable report. None of the Commissioners actively opposed the bill, with the exception of Commissioner Brownell in 1956, but most did not give it serious attention either. It was never a priority matter. Generally, though, the Commissioners testified in support of the objectives of the bill in spite of lack of approval from the Bureau of the Budget. (The Library Services Act has never been on the approved list of the powerful Bureau of the Budget, often referred to as the "fourth arm of government," although the Bureau gave approval to the LSA extension, based on a tapering off of funds over the five years.)

The position of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was reflected in a letter from Secretary Folsom to Senator Hill as late as in May 1956, in which he stated that the "Department of Health, Education and Welfare is in accord with the broad objectives of the measure . . . but in regard to budgetary limitations, and in view of other more urgent needs for Federal funds in the fields of education, health, and welfare we would not regard this as a priority measure."

At the White House level, President Roosevelt supported the general education bill, including grants for rural library service. President Truman favored the Library Services Bill without giving it any actual personal support, but at that time this was an advantage since the Congress opposed anything he supported. President Eisenhower was totally uninterested.

And yet library legislation was passed, not once but twice, within the last five years.

Both of the candidates for President in the 1960 election

had originally opposed the library bill when they were members of the House of Representatives. In 1950, Mr. Kennedy spoke against the bill, and Mr. Nixon voted against it. In 1956, however, Senator Kennedy appeared as speaker at a National Book Awards affair in New York and made a point of telling ALA President John Richards he supported the Library Services Bill wholeheartedly. In 1960, both Senator Kennedy and Vice President Nixon wrote strong letters of support which were used during the House floor debate on the extension of the Library Services Act.

In 1960, HEW Secretary Arthur Flemming and USOE Commissioner Lawrence Derthick actively supported the LSA extension, although it was not recommended in President Eisenhower's Message to the Congress.

How do we account for this dramatic change in attitude towards the Library Services Act over the years? In brief these are the steps that have been taken which I believe have brought this about:

1. Establishment of good relations with senators, representatives, and key members of their staffs and staffs of Congressional committees handling educational legislation. (Work with committee staff is as important as working with a congressman--if you can perform a service for the staff of a committee you have won a battle. Introductory letters from constituents to congressmen for ALA representatives, while not absolutely necessary, can often be of help. A dossier on each member of Congress regarding his position on a bill is useful; effort should not be spent on those who are vocally opposed to all types of federal grants.)

2. Personal visits to explain briefly the importance of library service and to set forth the current inadequacies of such service, especially in the state or district of a particular senator or representative:

- (a) By Washington Office representatives and by constituents who come to or happen to be in Washington.

- (b) By constituents when the senators or representatives are at home. (Evident support of a bill at the local level is what really interests a congressman. It is valuable to involve prominent state and local leaders--important persons who speak with influence--as well as librarians.)

3. Assembling facts and statistics in support of library legislation--from ALA, Office of Education, state library agencies, and elsewhere--and arranging for witnesses to testify at hearings.

4. Personal letters and telegrams (as informal as pos-



sible) from constituents to senators and representatives--along with any library items of interest to them, preferably from the congressman's home town.

5. Establishment of a network of state coordinators for action on federal legislation.

6. Obtaining cooperation and support of nonlibrary organizations.

7. Sending out newsletters, releases, telegrams, etc., giving the latest information on the federal legislative program and requesting appropriate action when necessary. (The Washington Newsletter has been published regularly since January 1949. Its mailing list was 457 in early 1952; we now send out about 900 copies of each issue. Many states reprint from the Newsletter.)

8. Developing a program of constant publicity on the legislation through professional journals, state library bulletins, educational bulletins, newspapers, periodicals, and other media of communication. (At several hearings, motion pictures were shown. And at one hearing when Nancy Gray of North Carolina brought a bookmobile to Washington, Chairman Barden had his picture taken beside it and it appeared in his home town newspaper. Moreover, the Education Committee took a recess during the hearing and everyone went out to see the bookmobile.)

9. Expressing thanks to congressmen in letters and telegrams for their actions at various stages of the bill--a step which cannot be overemphasized.

10. Honoring at meetings and banquets the members of Congress who have worked on library legislation and letting them know that the public appreciated their activity on its behalf.

11. Continuous visits to policy-forming officials at HEW and other executive agencies regarding the purposes and contents of the bill.

12. Use of all opportunities to show HEW and OE that ALA is behind the educational program of the Department and the Office and is supporting it effectively. (Secretary Marion Folsom was the first Secretary of HEW to receive an ALA delegation in 1957 to discuss library legislation.)

13. National Library Week publicity and projects.

One important factor which indicates the current attitude of Congress, impresses government officials, and has helped get increased appropriations for the Library Services Act in spite of opposition to these increases from the Administration is that ALA's representative is permitted to appear in person

before the House Appropriations Committee. Very few organizations are granted this privilege. Testimony is largely restricted to departmental witnesses and these officials can speak only in terms of the President's Budget. It was through this avenue that we were able to get added staff for the Library Services Branch this year. This is the first time personnel to support the basic program of the Branch has been authorized since it was established in 1938. That Congress put in money for staff which had been cut by the Bureau of the Budget has given added prestige to the Library Services Branch.

Not only is ALA allowed to present testimony but an increasing number of congressmen of both political parties have appeared in support of both the LSA appropriations and the LSA amendment. Even so, it was five years before the full authorization of \$7.5 million was recommended in the President's Budget and passed by both houses (87th Congress, 1st Session).

Contacts made in relation to the Library Services Act have also helped in promoting other legislation. Congressmen and government officials who have helped with the LSA are inclined also to support other library bills. They are responsive to the accomplishments of the Act and the wholehearted support given the legislation by librarians and friends of libraries from all over the country, who are, after all, their constituents.

Looking backward is interesting, but looking forward is challenging. We can take pride in what has been accomplished, but much still remains to be done. It took ten years of concentrated work to get a bill passed, and it wasn't easy extending that same bill last year. It will be even more difficult to get enacted into law the kind of omnibus legislation that will assist all types of libraries and help bring good library service to all citizens. Congress is still rurally oriented, as are the state legislatures which must provide the matching funds which will undoubtedly be required in any future legislation we may propose. However, labor has powerful influence in Congress, and big cities and metropolitan areas are demanding more equitable representation. Nevertheless, the forces of conservatism and tradition are still strong. We have come a long way; we can go a good deal further if the same enthusiasm, unceasing effort, spirit of cooperation, and record of solid achievement are maintained. The Library Services Act has been a powerful catalyst. Its success can help us attain even higher goals.

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## LSA AND THE LIBRARY SERVICES BRANCH

John G. Lorenz

It is difficult to overestimate the effect of the Library Services Act in improving the status and support of the library services unit in the Office of Education. A brief look at the past will serve to support this point.

Up to 1938, there was no library unit in the Office at all. Whatever was done in the field of library studies and research was done on a short-term or part-time basis. It wasn't that the library profession wasn't interested in achieving a more specific assignment of responsibility for libraries in the Office. As far back as 1892, Melvil Dewey wrote in the Library Journal:

Our purpose should be to secure in this visit to Washington what we have so long wanted, a library officer in the Bureau of Education. When we went to Washington twelve years ago, Commissioner Eaton agreed to appoint such a person if he could find a satisfactory man to do the work and give his entire time to looking after general library interests. That is the proper place for it to be done. I, therefore, offer the following [resolution] . . . .<sup>1</sup>

There followed a long series of resolutions by the American Library Association from then until 1934, when the ALA Council said flatly:

The federal government should assume responsibility for nationwide leadership in the library movement through a library agency associated with other agencies responsible for general educational, cultural, and recreational activities.<sup>2</sup>

Legislation to create a federal library agency was actually introduced in 1919, but the Library Service Division in the Office of Education, then a part of the Department of Interior, did

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not become a reality until 1937, when Congress appropriated funds for a Library Service Division in the Office of Education. The purpose of the new Division, as defined by Congress, was

For making surveys, studies, investigations, and reports regarding public, school, college, university, and other libraries; fostering coordination of public and school library service; coordinating library service on the national level with other forms of adult education; developing library participation in Federal projects; fostering Nation-wide coordination of research materials among the more scholarly libraries, inter-State library cooperating, and the development of public, school, and other library service throughout the country.<sup>3</sup>

This same language with only slight modifications still appears in the annual appropriations act for the Office.

Originally the Library Service Division was coordinate with all other divisions such as Higher Education, School Systems, and Comparative Education. In 1944, under reorganization it became the Service to Libraries Section of a new Division of Auxiliary Services, along with other sections such as Visual Education, Health, and Service to the Blind. In 1955, the Section was made subordinate to the Instruction and Materials Branch of the Division of State and Local School Systems.

The amount appropriated for the first year of operation in 1938 was \$25,000; by 1943, it had actually been decreased to \$20,830. Up to 1956, the annual appropriation for the unit never went much higher than \$40,000, and the staff never exceeded more than four professional and three statistical and clerical workers. The key position of public library specialist was unfilled during most of the period, first being frozen, and then completely dropped from the Section budget. The record shows that the library profession was dissatisfied with these developments and protested frequently. As early as 1948, the ALA Bulletin reported:

In discussions with the Office of Education officials, it has been agreed that the most effective method of strengthening the Service to Libraries Section will be through the initiating of a series of special projects of which the Library Demonstration Bill is a major example.<sup>4</sup>

These were most prophetic words. Following the passage of the Library Services Act in June 1956, Congress appropriated an additional \$140,000 for the administration of the Act. This permitted the addition to the staff of an assistant director, three library extension specialists, two research librarians, two project analysts, and supporting fiscal and clerical staff. The added funds also made possible the re-creation



and filling of the position of public library specialist and the strengthening of the basic research and statistical program staff. The total staff increased from six members to 23 within about four months. In addition, several short-term consultants were added to the staff to help get the program under way. The Service to Libraries Section was almost immediately moved out from under three administrative layers in the organization of the Office and made an independent branch reporting directly to the Deputy Commissioner of Education. This was the move that had been sought by the library profession and awaited for many years.

It was recognized at the time that this organizational placement of the Branch as a staff function parallel to the Publications Branch would not be permanent, but it was the best possible and most advantageous placement at the time. In early 1958, the Office created a new Division of Research under a new Assistant Commissioner for Research, and the Library Services Branch was made one of the four branches in this new division.\*

It is an understatement to say that the Library Services Act program from the very beginning was the focus of considerable attention and interest within the Office of Education and the Department. In the first place, it had been quite a few years since a new grant program had been assigned to the Office. Moreover, this was grant legislation that was not a part of the Administration's program--a library services bill had been before the Congress in various forms for about 20 years, and nothing definite or decisive had happened. Lastly, passage of this grant program meant that the federal government was supporting a public library development program before a general school aid bill was passed. Public libraries were traditionally thought of as a local community responsibility. Only 20 states had any kind of state grant for libraries program and most of these were very small. On the other hand, almost all the states already had substantial state grant programs for schools. You can see why public library grant legislation caused considerable surprise among government officials.

Being part of a large department and a large agency, the Library Services Branch had to work through many other units

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\*As a part of a U. S. Office of Education reorganization of April 1, 1962, the Library Services Branch is now a unit of the Division of Continuing Education and Cultural Affairs, Bureau of Educational Research and Development.



of these agencies to get the program under way, and on a crash basis, since many states were anxious to know what had to be submitted to the Commissioner of Education in order to have their state plans approved, receive their payments, and begin operation. The Personnel Branch in the Office was involved in writing job descriptions and recruiting and hiring staff. Property Management and the General Services Administration were involved in getting office space for new staff. In the midst of one of our busiest periods, the entire Branch had to move into another building because of added space requirements. The Statistics Branch of the Office assisted us in determining allocations to the states and matching state and/or local funds required; fiscal personnel were involved in arranging travel for staff and two representatives from each state library extension agency to attend a series of four regional conferences; administrative management personnel were involved in assisting us in conferences with the Department's legal staff in the Office of the General Counsel in the interpretation of the Act, the preparation, review, and approval of regulations necessary to administer the Act, and the preparation of proper fiscal forms and state plan forms. Interoffice communication and staff involvement, I can assure you, were intense.

It is interesting to note that much of our experience was utilized again in 1958 when Congress passed the National Defense Education Act which had several parts with features similar to LSA. The Library Services Branch was frequently called upon to give advice and counsel in getting these new programs started. We often felt like the "Voice of Experience."

All the preliminary work on the Act was completed by December 1956, and the payments to the states started going out in January 1957. It wasn't long before a high level of enthusiasm and commendation for the program began to develop in the Office. With such a late start in the fiscal year, it was extraordinary that 36 states and territories were actually able to qualify and receive their minimum grants of \$40,000 that first year.

The news on what was happening in the states as a result of the Library Services Act was encouraging from the very beginning. Two states created their first state library extension agencies; two others established their first state grant programs; four states passed special emergency appropriations to qualify for federal grants. The Branch used every possible means of transmitting this program information within the Office and the Department, frequently sending copies of reports, leaflets, brochures, pictures, etc., to administrative

heads. In a subsequent year we even had an LSA display in the lobby of the HEW building. Let me say again here that we can't overstress the importance in Washington of news from the field.

In addition to internal communication, we also wrote articles on the program or supplied information for articles in magazines such as Saturday Review, ALA Bulletin, Library Journal, Reader's Digest, The Clubwoman, and many others. The Wilson Library Bulletin devoted two complete issues to the LSA, one on the passage of the Act in 1956 and one on the different types of projects being carried out under state plans. The New York Times ran several articles and editorials. We also made sure that reprints of these items were well-distributed. One of our latest efforts was supplying information to Hawthorne Daniel for his book, Public Libraries for Everyone, recently published by Doubleday. When have you done enough disseminating? There are still many people who have never heard of the LSA or the LSB.

Very early in the program, an advisory committee of library leaders was appointed by the Commissioner of Education. The committee was first designated to advise on the Library Services Act, but it was soon obvious that its responsibility should be broadened to encompass the total program of the Library Services Branch. This committee first met at six-month, and more recently at twelve-month, intervals with the staff and the Commissioner, and has, after each meeting, developed recommendations to the Commissioner for improved program and support. These have provided an effective basis for budget requests of the Branch to the Office and the Office requests to the Department. At the same time, the meetings provided an excellent opportunity to build rapport between the profession and the Office. Germaine Krettek, Director of the ALA Washington Office, or her predecessor, Julia Bennett Armistead, has always attended these meetings.

There were many administrative problems at the beginning of the program, as many state agency heads remember. The Office of the General Counsel took considerable time in interpreting some of the language of the Act. Since the bill had not been expected to pass and it was not an Administration-sponsored bill, practically no preliminary analysis had been done on it. The matching provisions and the 1956 "floor" provisions were particularly difficult to interpret. The major decision was made only after the regional conferences with the state library agencies were held and much additional discussion in the Office. This decision was that the state and local matching funds did not have to be additional money above the funds

appropriated for fiscal 1956. Without this decision, the program would probably never have got off the ground in most states in the first year, and there would have been continuing difficulties in subsequent years.

Originally, the Office of the General Counsel also reviewed and approved all state plans submitted in order to make sure they met the legal and fiscal requirements. This was also a timeconsuming but educational process for all staff members concerned. Communication with the states by long distance telephone and at meetings was carried on at a rapid pace, and almost all of it was helpful. Many administrative memoranda had to be prepared and sent to the states in the early months and years to continue to clarify and explain what was possible and not possible under the program and what kind of reporting and record-keeping was required. We realize that many of these details were bothersome, especially when limited state staffs were naturally more concerned with putting their programs into operation than in legal and fiscal minutiae. Most of these problems have been resolved, and we are glad to note that the rate of preparing new administrative memos has dropped sharply. On the other hand, program and fiscal reports, audit reviews and audit exception schedules have continued to be timeconsuming and troublesome aspects of the program. Many of the states do not have technical staff to handle these matters, and in most cases professional staff have had to be involved. The same is true of our staff. We all should probably plan for and work toward the day when more of this aspect of the program can be handled by fiscal and clerical staff rather than by professional staff. We had a fiscal specialist assigned to us temporarily for the first year of the program, and we have missed his services ever since.

The staff of the Library Services Branch has used its best efforts to keep in communication with the state library agencies on all matters pertaining to the administration of state plans and professional problems concerning rural public library development. We originally hoped that we might visit each state at least once a year, but we know we have fallen short of this. We have called a meeting with representatives of state library extension agencies at practically every ALA annual and midwinter conference since January 1957. Some of these have had considerable professional substance; others have been on technical problems. We have participated in almost every regional conference and many state library association conferences since 1956. At most of these there were either general session meetings or smaller group meetings on the Library

Services Act. In addition, we have encouraged, helped plan, and participated in library meetings at regional and state levels devoted solely to the LSA program. For example, we have met with representatives of the Midwest state library agencies for five successive years and with representatives of the Western states twice; we also regularly take part in the annual meetings of the New England extension librarians. This meeting is the first nationwide broadscale meeting on evaluation of the program, and we are very pleased to be co-sponsoring it with the University of Illinois. It is an opportunity for all of us to establish directions and guidelines for the future.

In the publications program of the Library Services Branch, our principal publications on LSA have been the three annual summaries of state plans and programs.<sup>5</sup> A series of publications giving state by state detail of a grant program was unusual for the Office of Education to undertake, but these publications have been useful to us in informing government officials, members of Congress, and others about the results of the Act. There was no annual publication for the fourth year but rather a long summary article in the ALA Bulletin for June 1961, which was also reprinted separately.<sup>6</sup> For the fifth year, we are planning a five-year summary which will probably emphasize program evaluation.

Another LSA-related publication was the benchmark survey of state library extension services for 1955-56, which analyzed the resources and services of state library extension agencies in the year prior to the Library Services Act.<sup>7</sup> Since it was apparent from the survey that we were asking for information which was not available from all state agencies, the follow-up questionnaire for the year 1960-61 has been simplified and shortened considerably. The resulting data and publication, we believe, will give us a valuable picture of what has happened to state library extension service in the first five years of the LSA.

There have been more articles than there have been separate publications on the Library Services Act. Several specialized articles have been written by our staff, who have also supplied information for many articles written by others. Evelyn Day Mullen, for example, has done some pioneer analysis of centralized processing systems, and Helen Luce has outlined and described many of the new scholarship programs under LSA.

In addition, we have disseminated quite a bit of information to the state agencies and other library leaders throughout LSA administrative memoranda. We have been interested in



seeing some of these items picked up from time to time and used to good advantage in state publications. One publication which will appear as a series of attachments to issues in the LSA Memorandum series is "Patterns of Public Library Systems." A first draft was done by L. Marion Moshier. It consists of about eight case studies of different types of library systems, how they were organized, how they are being administered, and what services they are giving.

All of us, of course, work and produce within limitations of time, money, and staff available. We must point out, too, that despite the impact of the Library Services Act on the Office, the Department, and the Congress, no more positions have been added to the Library Services Branch since the Act was passed in 1956 until the past session of Congress, when \$20,000 for three added library positions was appropriated by Congress as part of the Office budget. These positions, however, were designated for survey and research work on other types of libraries.

Some of the discussion at the House appropriations hearings in the last Session is pertinent to this paper and quite revealing:

[The Executive Officer of the Office] said: I think the best evidence of the importance of the [Library Services Act] program is the fact that the American Library Association, which is the national organization in this field, is highly complimentary of the manner in which the Office has administered the rural library services program and, in general, has been very helpful in their support.

[The Chairman of the Committee] responded: They think, and I agree with them, that you ought to be doing something in the research area, and surveying the actual need of libraries in all areas.

[And the Executive Officer] concluded: Yes, I think one of the unfortunate things is that the program of aid to rural libraries systems has somewhat taken attention away from library needs in other areas, such as in our colleges and schools and public libraries in our urban centers.<sup>8</sup>

In short, the Library Services Act as it now stands is doing a good job. The maximum appropriation has been achieved for the past two years, and the program is showing impressive results.

Again, the Commissioner of Education and the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee summed up the attitude



toward the program during the last session of the hearing when the Commissioner concluded his statement by saying, "This program has received widespread acceptance and acclaim for its contribution to the improvement of cultural and educational advantages for rural people." And the Committee Chairman responded, "I think it is one of the finest programs in the Federal Government. This would be a good example for the chamber of commerce, because it took Federal leadership to make the gains you have just talked about."<sup>9</sup>

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## LSA AND STATE LIBRARY AGENCIES

Roger H. McDonough

To know where our state libraries are going, it is important first to know where they have been and where they are now. Without going into this exhaustively, let me develop with you for a few moments some of the things that have happened to us in the five years since the Library Services Act became the law of the land. I think we are all aware of the fact that the improvement in our state library agencies is one of the principal accomplishments of the Library Services Act. The publication, State Plans under the Library Services Act, Supplement 2,<sup>1</sup> makes this quite clear. State after state reported strengthened state library agencies in all parts of the country. Idaho, for example, employed its first trained administrator and three more professional librarians in the state agency. Kansas and Mississippi added professional librarians and clerical assistants. It was not just the small state agencies that did this, however; even the New York State Library built on its existing strength by adding specialists in Young Adult, Reference, and Children's Services. In all, more than 115 field workers or consultants were added to state agency staffs, an increase of more than 100 per cent over the total field staffs in existence in 1956. In addition, 285 other professional librarians were added.

It is significant that 15 states, in addition to adding staff and other resources to their central agencies, established or strengthened regional branches or extension offices. Equally noteworthy is the fact that more than 30 processing centers were established under the stimulus of the Library Services Act and are now serving more than 500 libraries in the several states. Granted that it is largely the smaller libraries that are being serviced in this manner, it is still true that this figure represents just about one-fourteenth of the total number of public libraries in the United States today. State agencies have played a key part in this development, which represents an important and significant step forward toward our announced goals of larger library systems for the United States.<sup>2</sup>

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Let us turn our attention now to some of the factors that will operate to increase the size and importance of state library agencies in the next five to ten years. In the first place, the Library Services Act in some form or other will continue ] for an indefinite period of time. The tremendous support received in both houses of the Congress for the extension of the Act appears to justify this categorical statement. I believe that, like the Smith-Hughes program in vocational education and the George-Barden program in agriculture, there will be a continuing partnership of federal and state agencies in the library field for some time to come. Other important 7 federal measures, such as the Depository Library Bill and the proposed revision of the National Defense Education Act, to name only two, also have implications for state library agencies. Clearly, these agencies must be equipped to handle the administrative and leadership responsibilities that will result from the American Library Association's increasingly important legislative program. }

A second important factor that must be considered is the 7 vastly increased population we shall have to contend with. In the next decade, the nation is going to have to provide for millions of additional people, more of whom will have been formally educated than ever before. Thus, we can expect to have more people, more of them will have attained higher levels of education, and they are going to read more books. Inevitably, 1 this will result in increased pressures upon the state agencies to give leadership in helping municipalities and counties solve the increasingly perplexing problems that will confront them. In this connection, it may be noted that the population explosion will accentuate the already complex political structures within our various state boundaries. In hundreds of instances, library districts now bear almost no relationship to the marketing and shopping habits of the areas involved. The need to cut across these artificial political boundaries is an obvious one, but it requires a high degree of statesmanship to over- 1 come the inherent parochialism of the population of the communities and counties involved. The accomplishments that have already been recorded under the stimulus of the Library Services Act in developing larger units of service indicate that this is a fruitful field which should be pursued actively in the years ahead.

Still another reason for increased state participation in library affairs is the change in sources of financial support. A decade ago, for example, only a very small amount of the tax money spent for public library service throughout the United

States came from state grants. In the next five years, that had increased substantially, as shown in the following table:

Public Library Income

	<u>Local Public Funds</u>	<u>State Grants</u>	<u>Total</u>
1950	\$102,935,905 <sup>a</sup>	\$1,957,172 <sup>a</sup>	\$104,893,077*
1955/56	162,696,621 <sup>b</sup>	4,977,176 <sup>b</sup>	167,673,797**

\*Includes Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico

\*\*Includes Alaska and Hawaii

- a. U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.  
Public Library Statistics - 1950 (Bulletin 1953, No. 9).  
Washington, D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office,  
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- b. U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.  
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As recently as 1958, however, the total amount of state monies appropriated for public libraries amounted to less than the total federal monies appropriated that year under the Library Services Act. To show how swiftly things can change, the current New York State grants-in-aid program alone exceeds \$8 million, more than the total for all the states authorized under the Library Services Act. Two years ago, New Jersey embarked upon a state aid program with an initial appropriation of \$400,000. Pennsylvania has just made an initial appropriation of \$500,000 for a similar grant program, and Massachusetts has embarked upon a \$1 million-plus program for public library development in that state. As the sources of additional local tax revenues dry up, sheer necessity will force us to turn increasingly to state and federal support for library purposes. The implications of this for our state agencies are too obvious to require further comment.

I have referred to the fact that the increasing complexity of our society presents us with certain kinds of problems in providing for effective service outlets of various kinds at local and county level. A related aspect of this problem is observed at state level. I refer to the increasing need for research into all kinds of activities in which the state now finds itself engaged, or will in the future. The problems of labor relations, highway



safety, water supply, airport control, and the continuing broad problems of health, education, and welfare, for example, all require increasing analysis in depth. Legislative research agencies have increased in number and size in the past decade, and although we have little information about research units that have been established in the executive branches of state government--such as departments of education and welfare, I am certain that most of us can cite specific instances of such agencies in our own states. Obviously, the development of these research programs places additional burdens upon the state libraries, which must build strong collections to satisfy the many-faceted research demands that will be made upon them. Many of the agencies represented here today are participating in the cooperative exchange program for legislative research materials initiated under the aegis of the National Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments. However, we need more comprehensive documents exchange programs that will cover the publications of executive departments of state government, as well as special commission and legislative reports. Few state libraries are now in a position to offer well-rounded documents exchange programs, and we need to take active steps in the near future to take care of the obvious needs confronting us in this area.

One piece of unfinished extension business touches one of the principal weaknesses of the American library system: our failure to provide adequate reference facilities at local level. In the majority of small American communities, the ordinary citizen cannot expect to obtain adequate information in response to questions of only average difficulty. The reason, of course, is that too many small libraries lack the needed materials, the trained staff to service them, or both. The systems of libraries toward which we are striving will eventually help to correct the situation, but, meanwhile, an information network, in which the state library agencies would logically be the principal coordinating agents, would help plug the gap. There are all sorts of interesting possibilities here, including the use of short-wave radio and UHF equipment, as well as high-speed telephonic facsimile reproduction units, to tie the various libraries in the state together in an intelligence network. There is a growing interest in this subject, and I hope that within a very few years we shall see some truly significant experiments being made in this direction.

If these intelligence networks are to operate successfully, there must be strong reference and research collections in strategically located centers to back up the local units. Ob-

viously, it is sensible and economical to build upon existing strengths wherever possible, but, where there is a complete absence of any large library in a given geographical area, it may be necessary to create libraries out of whole cloth. As I have already indicated, 15 states have initiated or strengthened existing branches under the Library Services Act. I suspect that where new branches have been created, it is because there was a clear need to supply a strong unit in an area then lacking one. In considering how we can best utilize the monies that are made available to us in the form of federal and state grants-in-aid, it is possible that a fair share of these funds might well be employed in developing strong strategic centers instead of turning over all the money to the municipalities and counties to improve and expand local services. A strong state branch supplementing the collections and services of local libraries and providing leadership and guidance would be of inestimable help in raising library standards in a given region.

Mention should also be made of the necessity to strengthen services to the various departments and agencies of state government by aiding in the development of departmental collections. Washington State is now working in this direction, and the New Jersey State Library is cooperating with such departments as Labor and Industry, Health, Agriculture, and our own Department of Education in developing library facilities in the new buildings which are now under construction for these agencies. As I see it, state libraries will gradually come to serve as core libraries serving departmental libraries much in the manner that a university library serves its satellite facilities. Another related area which as yet has been little developed is service to the penal and correctional institutions. Only one or two states--as, for example, New York and Maryland--now have institutional library supervisors, but undoubtedly this pattern will be followed by other states in the future. Whether such positions are placed under the state libraries or in the particular agencies involved, it seems certain that our state libraries will bear some share of the responsibilities for providing these needed services.

Still another field with which state library agencies must concern themselves is that of collecting, interpreting, and distributing statistical information. Although the Library Services Branch has made tremendous strides in this area, it is unable to do the entire job, and there is a clear need to obtain precise, accurate, and up-to-date data at state level. John Eastlick, in his report The Sixties and After,<sup>3</sup> emphasized this very strongly

by pointing out that at the time he was writing his report, it was simply not possible to obtain comparable and accurate data on all the 50 states. I am certain that Phillip Monypenny and his survey team are experiencing similar problems along this line.

It is also possible that our state agencies may be called upon to serve as central storage facilities for other libraries in their state. There is no reason, for example, why small or medium-sized public libraries should maintain outdated books or long runs of 19th-century periodicals when microfilm copies of the originals may be obtained quickly from a central source. Many local libraries would gladly weed their collections drastically if they were certain that the materials would be on call at their state library. The New Jersey State Library, under a law passed in 1948, has been operating a deposit and exchange library service of this sort, but, because of limited space, it has not been able to engage in the activity in a full-scale way. It is hoped that our projected new building will permit us to step up our approach to this problem.

As you see, I have ticked off, in fairly rapid order, a number of reasons to support my feeling that the state library agency is destined to grow and flourish in the United States. I find it significant that one of the chief conclusions reached by John Eastlick in his above-mentioned report relates to the future place of state library agencies:

The growth of the state library agency in the past five years is the outstanding phenomenon in recent library history. State library agencies, however, are not developing uniformly and are not assuming the same responsibilities of leadership in all states. State library agencies in general have no responsibility to, or authority over, institutions of higher education, have only general advisory responsibility to public libraries, may or may not have advisory responsibility to school libraries, and frequently operate by persuasion rather than authority.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Eastlick went on to recommend:

It should be the program of the American Library Association to encourage state library agencies to expand their supervisory functions. These institutions should also become major sources of information about the libraries of their state.<sup>5</sup>

All of this at once excites and frightens me. I see a tremendous challenge in the vistas that lie ahead, and I would face them unflinchingly if only I could tell you where we are to find the trained, qualified people who are needed to take on these

added responsibilities. After five years of the Library Services Act and four years of National Library Week, librarians, who have been working tremendously hard to improve library services at local and state levels, now stand poised on the threshold of a real breakthrough into new and exciting library frontiers, but we don't have the trained people to do the job. Somehow, we must find solutions to the problems of staffing that plague us all, in order that we can push forward in a co-ordinated program based on federal, state, and local cooperative efforts.

The role of the state library in this total picture is a peculiar one, perhaps because we are, in most instances, advisory agencies rather than supervisory ones. This calls for a special kind of leadership. If we get too far out in front of the librarians and trustees in our respective jurisdictions, we may be accused of being dictators, self-seekers, or worse. If we hang back a little on the theory that library development must be approached democratically (frequently this means at the level of the slowest paced), we may be accused of failing to meet our responsibilities. Ours, then, is the task of leading, without seeming to lead (avoiding either paternalism or maternalism in the process), and of serving as an inspirational, cohesive, and coordinating agency for all the library elements in the state. It is an exasperating, exciting, exhaustive, rewarding, and frequently amusing, task. And--since I am saying this in the family--I think we do it rather well.

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## LSA AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Carma Russell Leigh

I was asked (and how could I have thought last summer I could do it?) to analyze and forecast the different directions library system development resulting from the Library Services Act has taken and is likely to take in different states and in different parts of the country, together with the underlying reasons for such differences. Is consolidation the answer? Or cooperation? Or federation? What is the (proper) role of the local library in larger systems? What are the effects of LSA to date on this role? Indeed, what is the future of the local library--its collection, its staff, its services? In short, what has happened, what can, will, or should happen in larger-unit development as state agencies, LSA funds, and local and regional libraries join forces?

These were the questions asked, probably answerable only by the most careful study of each of the state plans, followed by on-the-scene observation, and analysis of what has been and will be done with the plans, in every area where any of the funds have gone and will be used. This is quite beyond my West Coast reach. From partial knowledge of state plans, and extremely limited observation of what has been done with them, I shall try to make a few comments on the questions raised.

The underlying thought of this paper is the need for money to develop public libraries through systems, and for any significant effect on the improvement of the services and operations of small libraries. Emerson said 120 years ago: "Money, which represents the prose of life and which is hardly spoken of in parlors without an apology, is in its effects and laws as beautiful as roses." Without apologies, may I say that the one ingredient not previously in the picture that has stimulated whatever has been accomplished through LSA is money. And

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I look ahead with some anxiety to the possible termination of the federal money, because in my own state, and in nearly half the states, we have not yet obtained anything to take its place. Nothing, that is, to take the place of the "outside" money that is the stimulant to action and the glue that holds system-wide services of many pre-existing independent local libraries together in newly created systems, unless such libraries have completely changed their organization and government to consolidate. Even with consolidation, the level of service will have to be lower than it could be if outside funds continue to be part of the financial support.

We were told when we were asked to speak here that it was hoped we would abandon the "glad tidings, good news" approach in favor of a close and critical look at the total impact of LSA. I hope we can do this, hard as it is, apparently by both nature and habit, for librarians.

Slightly less than half the states, among them California, still have no state financial grants-in-aid, and where we have started LSA programs that depend for continuance--or continuance at no lower level of service--on more than local appropriations, we are quite unsure of the future. We are literally doing a certain amount of gambling and the game isn't over.

It is useful in trying to analyze and forecast LSA's effect on the development of larger units of library service and on the role of the small local library, to go back to what the Public Library Inquiry found as the pattern of public libraries six years before LSA began. The last chapter of The Public Library in the United States, "The Direction of Development," made some cautious indications of development for the decade ahead, the decade that has now passed. We were advised that it is in the nature of social science inquiry to emphasize analysis of the present and past institutional structure and performance, but to be cautious about predicting the shape of things to come. We were told, therefore, to "look elsewhere for those pictures of library utopias which, although they may provide much needed inspiration for the day's work, are not constructed out of actual probabilities, trends, and achievements."<sup>1</sup>

Half the incorporated places were too small or too poor to have any public library, and likewise two-thirds of the people in unincorporated areas were without direct library service. All but a tenth of the existing library units were so small or so poor that they could not by themselves either assemble a large enough stock of books and other materials or support the trained personnel to constitute a modern public library service as de-

fined by the official objectives.

I cannot give you, because I do not know, the 1961 nationwide facts about these 1950 conditions. John Lorenz' office reports that state funds for rural public library service have increased 75 per cent since 1956, and local appropriations for rural libraries have increased 50 per cent since that date.

The past decade has provided several major stimuli, with national impact on public library development: (1) New York's program of conditional grants of substantial funds for the purpose of creating large library systems; (2) the adoption of the 1953 Public Library Service Standards for California; (3) in 1956, two major events in public library history and development, the adoption of the new public library standards by the American Library Association and the passage by Congress of the Library Services Act. Now, five more years have passed, and the availability of LSA money has stimulated, forced--there is no other way to obtain it--the most widespread planning for public library service that has ever occurred. This illustrates the power of money, even a relatively small amount!

The state plans under the Library Services Act show that most states incorporated the library system concept into their plans, and, in various ways, LSA projects are pointed in the direction of larger units of library service. (Some genuine larger units of library service have actually been created which come close in many respects to meeting the 1956 ALA public library standards, notably the well-demonstrated and hard-won five-county, 15,000-square-mile Columbia River Regional Library in Washington State. This was a brilliant demonstration of the wisdom in that case of putting all a state's "eggs"--LSA dollars--in one basket.) Maryan Reynolds, Washington State Librarian, is here, and time would be well spent in having her tell of this.

The Library Services Branch reported in January 1961 that library service has for the first time reached one and one-half million people, and substantial improvements in existing service have been made for eight million more people. This is assumed to have been done largely through county and regional library developments, or "larger units of library service," although I am not sure from the information I found available. How many such systems, and the "size" and viability of these systems, we do not yet know. All this will require analysis that undoubtedly will be made by the Library Services Branch.

What has been the effect on the small local library? With far from complete information, it seems to be different

in different states, which is about the only solid, sure piece of information I can offer. Every state has had to decide whether to use the LSA funds in areas where little or no local service existed, or in improving existing programs. The choice has depended on many things, and we shall have some of both in many states, given more time. The first thought is often to use the money in areas without any service, and this may or may not be the best choice.

There are frequently times when it seems easier and far more appealing, because it offers something for everyone where nothing has existed, to attempt to create viable larger units of library service where there has been no library service. The very effort to improve existing service is, in the minds of some of those responsible for the status quo, an indictment of them and is resented and often resisted. Where no local library exists, effort can be concentrated wholly on the people whom the library system is planned to serve. We neither have to combat the image of some poor service which people have experienced and which is their only criterion, nor do we have to overcome the indifference of people who consider what they have to be good enough. In other words, there is more "hunger" for library service--the best obtainable--and we can set our goals higher. But this is not the basis on which choices of demonstration areas and programs are made. We all know that, as we choose areas on which to concentrate for library development, a great many factors come together and eventually determine the choice. Expression of local interest, along with the strength and determination of local leadership, has a great deal to do with it. In each kind of area, there are obstacles which must be planned for and worked around, if not overcome. Some kind of local library usually exists wherever people live in groups, and it is good when we can build on what exists. Fortunately, some local libraries are aware of the greater needs and are, as they should be, the nucleus for building systems.

Insofar as I have been able to examine recent state reports, the printed summaries from the Library Services Branch and publications of state libraries and library associations, there has been considerable building on the local existing libraries, in many places accompanied by placing the library on public tax support for the first time. Library laws and general laws frequently make it necessary to start this way, as the first step to the later formation of a larger system, but the greatest possible effort should be made to have it understood that this is only the first step and to prepare for the next step.



The size of the local existing library seems to make a difference in whether it will join up with the new larger unit. I can't define the point in size when the possibility of actual consolidation becomes less likely, but I am not aware of consolidation occurring voluntarily in the cases of quite large existing libraries. The exception of Buffalo and Erie County comes to mind, and I understand that was not a spontaneous, voluntary choice, but forced by a special tax situation and later greatly strengthened and expanded by New York's grants-in-aid program. By far the larger number of outright consolidations of incorporated towns or cities with county library service in California occurred decades ago when either no tax-supported libraries existed in the places then incorporated, or whatever libraries did exist were very small, and vested interests had not taken deep root.

I do not expect anything like 100 per cent agreement when I say that this seems to indicate little prospect of consolidation of long-existing local libraries into systems, especially when there is what seems to be a considerable investment visible in the local institution. I will maintain that to bring about much consolidation requires a skill in logic plus persuasion superior to that most of us have. I can point to only two or three such consolidations which I believe I caused to be made--and one of those fell apart when there was a change of librarians. Logic in that instance is still on the side of the consolidation, but, as one librarian said of the breakup, "Librarians can't meet their own projected plans, as too many will destroy something to assure they have a private mud pie." All of which raises questions about the percentage of true professionalism among librarians.

Yet nothing seems to be black or white in this business, but streaked or gray. The library system that wanted to continue the consolidation, but couldn't because of the reneging partner, now has its own professional head and staff, and the new head librarian says although she would have liked to continue the consolidation, her area is delighted that they now have their "own" librarian again, because under consolidation the head didn't live in the center of their own area. Perhaps, after all, this shows that we are dealing with humans and human nature, with all their whims, wishes, likes, and dislikes, and somehow we have to adjust to these and recognize our own share in these same characteristics. Well, to sum up, all the people in that region are spending more but getting less in an effort to maintain the higher level of service to which they became accustomed during the consolidation.



Before one dismisses consolidation as the single bright hope of the future for public library development, it should be said that tax and financial stringencies may bring more of it about than now seems probable. It should also be considered that some of the apathy that exists in some of our present consolidated systems probably springs from too long ignoring the values of lively local participation in the plans and support of local community libraries that have long been part of consolidated libraries. I hope we are waking up in time to this. Of course, it is easier for the central administrator to administer the consolidated system, on the level of pure administration, but there are wellsprings of growth, adaptation, and variation in local communities that are great sources of strength to the library system. Robert Leigh said in 1950 in The Public Library in the United States,

The emphasis in public library organization thus far [speaking of the nation as a whole] has been on local initiative, citizen participation, adaptation of the service to the variant interests and conditions of different communities. There has been little attempt to gain the inherent economies and efficiencies of larger units in technical operations and in use of skilled personnel or by centralization to reduce the inequalities of service resulting from uneven distribution of population and economic resources. It is one of the assumptions of the Inquiry that in a large-scale modern democratic, industrial society there are advantages both in local initiative and participation and in larger units of administration; that neither should be neglected, but that governmental structure should be contrived to give the greatest possible scope to both principles.<sup>2</sup>

I was reminded of some neglect on the local participation side of this combination recently when I read the comment of an early California county librarian, who administered a consolidated system, "I was accustomed to a board of supervisors who neither helped nor interfered." "Neither helped nor interfered" was not enough to keep the system vital, strong, and unified; that system split into city and county libraries many years ago, and we are still trying to put them back together again, with by no means assured success. If we do succeed, it will be with the creation of advisory citizen library commissions to participate in the planning and development of the re-unified system. They won't come together any other way, nor do we think they should. We have a rather large number of city split-offs from county systems, in the most popu-

lous areas, and the recent creation of local community advisory groups, by appointment of the county board of supervisors, is seen as a means of slowing down this trend, stopping it whenever possible, and obtaining greater local community interest in and understanding of the values of a larger system.

California, which of all the states probably has the lowest percentage of public libraries with boards of trustees, has not proved that the absence of library boards, and having library administrators directly responsible to elected officials or appointed general administrators, guarantees a better library. That statement should be qualified by pointing out the obvious fact that practically everything depends on the quality of the officials, the administrators, the library board members, and the librarians. But there can be no gainsaying that active, intelligent local interest in the welfare of the library by citizens and citizen groups is essential. As we know, library boards can sometimes lose awareness, or fail ever to gain it, of their proper functions and responsibilities. They can become tax and local-autonomy watchdogs, confusing their roles with those of other officials. The library scene is strewn with situations all but moribund through their indifference or all but choked through their overinterference. We believe that it is worth practically any effort to try to enliven that kind of situation or improve it, for trustee and citizen interest in library development must be obtained if we are ever to fulfill the objectives of the public library.

Well, then, what of cooperation? Who could be against it? Too loosely defined and practiced, however, it usually accomplished almost nothing except to maintain a vague good will without tangible results in library improvement. But, add some money to the cooperative good will, and make a specific plan for new and improved services not possible without cooperation, and the word "cooperation" loses its vagueness and begins to express its true meaning, "acting or operating jointly with another or others."

In some states, "cooperative library system" is a legal entity and is undergirded not only by a legal foundation but also by grants of state funds to finance the larger operations which can better be performed on a systemwide basis. In this sense, the promise of cooperation for library development is considerable. In fact, we see this as a major direction of development among the small and small-to-medium-sized libraries in California. Yet, our shining example of such a cooperative library system demonstration, the 16 libraries in six counties that have formed the North Bay Cooperative Library System, will

be in grave danger of collapse to little of anything more than a central processing center for the 16 separate libraries if we are again unsuccessful in obtaining state financial grants-in-aid from the State Legislature in the next two years. Incidentally, we believe that no amount of logic or persuasion could have persuaded the officials of those 16 cities, counties, and districts to enter into a consolidation agreement, nor is it possible to see how the service could have been as much improved as it has been under the present arrangement, if they had consolidated.

What of federation? We lack an exact definition of this term, one that could be uniformly understood to mean a certain kind of library system throughout the United States. If I took the time to describe the organization of the North Bay Cooperative Library System in California, I think you would probably tell me that it is a federated system. I would agree with you. The terminology really doesn't seem very important; the operation and the service which the system produces are important. The libraries in that group apparently liked the sound of "cooperative" better than "federated" when they selected their name. Since they are located in a sort of geographic crescent around the north reaches of San Francisco Bay, they started out to call their system the Fertile Crescent Library System, in tribute to the rich agricultural and productive resources of the area, but that title soon fell by the wayside in favor of North Bay Cooperative.

In looking over the recent five-year summaries prepared by states for the Library Services Branch, one notices that the things which seem to count for most in influencing local library agencies and state agencies to add funds to those of the federal LSA program are of two types, tangible and intangible. The tangible things include the special surveys made with LSA funds like those of Hawaii, Maine, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin; bookmobiles; book collections improved both in content and appearance; added nonbook materials such as films and records; more and better-trained staff; communications systems such as telephone and teletype; publications both for professional information and for public relations. Less tangible but equally effective, if not more so, in obtaining support, as shown by the reports, are the myriad increases in personal contacts and communication between state library agencies and local librarians and other citizens, librarians with branch library staffs, library trustees with their librarians, library trustees with each other, and groups of librarians working with each other, all of which are neces-

sary for the establishment and operation of larger units of library service. There seems to be an increase in the general vitality of numerous libraries which were not active before. All this has resulted in stimulation of local use of libraries, an improved public attitude toward libraries, and an increased awareness of the value of libraries on the part of some citizens and legislators at local and state levels as well as in the Congress.

Let us not assume from this brief note of optimism that the job that remains to be done does not dwarf all that has been done thus far. And what has been done can fall apart if we do not have money to carry on. I refuse to admit that we should not have gambled, or that we should have used the money only for programs that could surely be carried on with local funds alone in case state funds are not forthcoming soon. Hard as it may be to lose the gamble in some cases, it seems better to demonstrate service of a quality which will justify the assumption of a proper share of support by government at all levels.

We can see that the forces joined together by the Library Services Act have in some places stimulated strong interest and activity in bettering service to the public through the small library by encouraging the coordination of that library's program with a larger system. This is particularly true in the area of book selection and the development of book collections which are, of course, essentially the core of service. This is especially important today when the recognition of solid learning is assuming more importance in people's lives. A recent report of the Stanford Research Institute stated that by the late 1960's and early 1970's America's status symbols will have changed completely from automobiles and all the other current status symbols to knowledge and intellectual achievement. It will still require personal ability and effort for such intellectual achievement, and to this the public library can contribute in no small measure by developing good information and reference services. The ability of a small public library to develop these services locally is directly related to whether it has access to the kind of book collection and the type of service which a larger and stronger unit can provide. The flexibility of the LSA permits such access.

I do not see, in some of the programs, as much emphasis on reference and information services as there should be to make the public library the uniquely reliable source in this area. I believe that we should concentrate more on this function, even in the smallest kind of project. Our rural and small



town service in the past has been too much a popular circulation service and has not commanded the respect and support it would command if it had proved that it could meet the test of constantly providing needed information and reference service. This is a difficult kind of project to develop, particularly when, to get it started, we must more or less superimpose it on a group of independent libraries that have paid little attention to it in the past. New systems should build in, from the very beginning, the best possible reference and information service, and not wait to add it later. Of course, this is a relatively expensive service, in unit cost, and we are not sure local governments will pick up the tab.

Processing centers are another difficult operation to carry on for groups of independent, "cooperative," or "federated" libraries. It is far easier to perform central processing in a consolidated system. Central processing is still worthwhile, even where consolidation is impossible, because separate processing takes proportionately too large blocks of time in libraries that can least afford this time and money. It is a largely mechanical process that can be centralized with almost no fear of loss of autonomy. Thus, it seems only sensible that small libraries be given the opportunity to relieve themselves from the "busyness" of circulation detail and cataloging and processing detail, to devote their time and talent to serving the public. This can best be done by utilizing the procedures and the operations of a larger system that has been able to develop new ways, methods, and equipment to do this work.

All of our projects should be studied and made to contribute as substantially as possible to the objectives of a richer, deeper, and wider book and information service, and an efficient performance of the mechanical library functions. This seems to me the ultimate test of what we do.

What of the future? I trust we are not deluding ourselves in believing there is wide acceptance of the larger-system concept among librarians, even though it is little more than lip service in some cases. It is true that a number of local small libraries still view this concept as a threat rather than as what we believe to be their golden opportunity; but if money to support interlibrary cooperation (or federation, or, where appropriate, consolidation) is made available, I believe these doubters will be much in the minority. The citizens to whom these libraries are responsible will not allow them to remain isolated and weak. Some will not in our lifetime change; most will--but the money has to come from somewhere.



If the plans of public libraries as expressed in meetings, workshops, institutes, and conferences over the past several decades were reviewed, we would find an almost universal pattern of continued emphasis on cooperation in one form or another. In 1955 when I was the president of the California Library Association and the annual conference was held in San Jose, I was preparing a few opening remarks for the local hosts. I reviewed the list of past meetings and found CLA had last met in San Jose some 35 or more years earlier. Curious, I looked up the theme, to compare it with the theme of Interlibrary Cooperation chosen for the 1955 Conference. The wording varied only slightly. The earlier conference in the same place had as its theme, Library Cooperation! Much of the same ground had been covered. The discouraging thing was that there had been few outstanding accomplishments in the intervening years. Many feeble attempts at cooperation had been made, but, without funds to support the expenses of establishing cooperative enterprises and some continuing money to maintain the structure of functional consolidation or cooperation, these attempts had had little influence on the organization and level of service.

Librarians during the intervening years were no more lacking in imagination and creative ability than we are today when we are bringing into being a number of going systems of cooperation. In those years, many plans were drawn up, discussed, and hopefully taken home from workshops and meetings, but nothing happened except some quite useful union lists of materials that cost little. The difference is--today we have some money, thanks to LSA.

In 1958, we held a workshop on problems of library service in metropolitan areas. Preliminary working plans were drawn up; concentrated work was done on the plans by well-qualified people. If good planning had been enough to get cooperative systems off the ground in metropolitan areas, we would have these systems now. But we do not have them. One of the plans was for the Greater Sacramento area. It could, with slight modifications, have been put into effect, but it required some initial investment, not much, but, without state or federal aid, neither the county nor the city could pick itself up and even consider actually implementing such a plan. If money had been available for integration grants, with no rural definition restrictions, we might have an integrated or cooperative system in California's capital area today. There is little doubt that Sacramento County and City could have afforded this plan, maybe even continued it, largely on their own

resources, but, without some money that did not have to come directly out of the local property tax, the work of the group that developed the Sacramento Plan was largely an exercise in plan-making. The other really good plans that were worked out for metropolitan areas have fared similarly. I hope they are only temporarily shelved and will be taken off the shelf and dusted up for action when some state grants-in-aid are provided.

An earlier workshop on the mechanics of library cooperation produced the beginnings of a plan for a centralized processing center. Libraries in northeastern California were interested, would have cooperated immediately, but there were no funds for setting it up. Years of talk and no action intervened, but when the Library Services Act was passed, the plans came to life and reality, and through much tribulation and experimentation, there is now a working Processing Center, beginning now to be partially supported by the 20 libraries in the 12 or so counties it serves, with prospect of complete local support ahead.

In another workshop, again on library cooperation, the plan of the North Bay Cooperative Library System developed, and that had quicker results, because the increased appropriation for the Library Services Act became available. Thus, this cooperative plan went into action almost immediately--or as immediately as anything can when cities, counties, districts, and the state and federal governments are all involved.

Another effect of the availability of money through LSA is that it stimulates planning. A plan must be developed before any funds can be granted. Everyone plans in his head, and expects to do more thorough planning sometime, but few libraries really work out a plan on paper, stating where they are going and how they are going to reach their goals. With LSA in existence, this must be done, both for the state to obtain the federal funds, and again for the locality to obtain the funds from the state for local use. Then, when the money is granted, it must be used according to that plan to accomplish the goals that were set up. The clear implication of LSA forces libraries to work out plans by which they can cooperate with other libraries. They are motivated by a direct reward for working out such plans, and this is high motivation. Thus, librarians are free to work out plans and the many problems that must be solved, unhampered by the basic question, "Where is the money coming from?"

This is a machine age in which numerous operations are becoming automated. Libraries should keep pace and,

wherever suitable, make machine operations serve the cause of improved library service. Teletype is essential to some types of systems, Flexowriters, multilith, Xerox, or some type of reproducing equipment are all vital to centralized processing in cooperative systems, and rapid copying is a "must" for modern library service, to mention only a few mechanical aids. How are these acquired? With money. Justification is needed, but not too difficult to supply when the need is obvious. These machines are not frills; today they are the essentials of communication and supply of materials. They make more difference than the typewriter did when it replaced hand copying. Station wagons, bookmobiles, trucks, and other automotive equipment are also essential--and also cost money. Both the communications and transportation equipment help overcome time and distance, to bring books and services quickly to people. Our plans must include them, and the money must come from somewhere.

Plans show that we have ventured a little into the field of scholarships to prepare more and better professional library personnel, without whom little progress can be made. We have not yet really experienced maximum benefit from these scholarships, partly because the recipients go into the best-paying and already best-supported rural library systems. We still have few qualified people to go into the really rural areas and develop systems, and we are not likely to have more until there is state financial aid to enable such areas to pay salaries that will attract them. Otherwise, we may have to narrow the obligations of scholarship recipients, but if we do, will we have enough applicants?

The money must come from somewhere for more research in the development of library systems. We had a research study of affiliated libraries under way at the California State Library. It was not directly financed by federal funds, but it was made possible because we had more library consultants than ever before. It was not completed, because we lost Dorothy Sinclair back to Enoch Pratt Library, but we do have some of the results of her work. If we had many more such careful studies as the underpinning for public library development and planning, the money would be more readily obtained, for justifications would be more scientifically prepared.

What has happened, what can, will, or should happen in larger-unit development as state agencies, LSA funds, and local and regional libraries join forces? We should achieve modern public library service for all the United States. It is entirely possible now to overcome time and distance with know-

ledge and equipment already in existence. We also have rational standards for public library service. But the money--more money--has to come from somewhere. It is not a large amount; it is indeed a tiny amount compared with other major public services.

Broader and more diversified sources of tax support are needed. Only last week the League of California Cities was told that "the property tax means of financing government is loaded with shortcomings. As many writers on government finance point out, it is wrong in theory, doesn't work in practice and has little to commend it except its age." State libraries alone cannot obtain the broader support, important though their key roles are in statewide library development. Strong professional library associations, mobilizing trustees and other lay groups, will have to obtain the financial support for statewide programs.

Finally, I grant that money is not everything; librarians are required--librarians with the imagination, the skill, and the cooperative ability to see the possibilities of modern public library service and to bring it about. Judging by past speed in accomplishments, we may not live to see modern public library service all over America, but I hope the acceleration characteristic of so much of recent modern life will also take hold of us in the library profession to get the job done. In the last analysis, however, money is an essential ingredient, and it has to come from all levels of government.

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## FINANCING RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Hannis S. Smith

### Introduction

In approaching this subject, there is a strong temptation to deal at length with library budgets and budget management. The literature of this subject is extensive, and, while it is of uneven quality, there is a considerable amount which is highly competent and quite useful. There is another temptation: to deal at length with how to get public officials to provide from the funds under their control the necessary money for the operation of rural public library systems. While this will certainly enter into consideration here, it will not be the major emphasis.

Having eschewed these temptations, I have chosen rather to take a "Cloud 9" approach and attempt to review the financing of rural public library systems from what might be termed an "orbital viewpoint." This has the advantage of being only dimly known and has the drawback of theoretical indefiniteness. However, it contains the promise that if we can avoid a Jules Verne treatment of the subject, we may come up with a better understanding of the problems to be faced in financing the public library developments which are the general goals of our profession.

The emphasis in this paper, as the title shows, will be on financing--the provision of capital and operating funds for rural public library systems. The definition of such a system will be taken to mean that the service area of the system, while it may include one or more urban communities and perhaps even a metropolitan center, includes extensive areas which are rural in the strictest definition of the Bureau of the Census. In fact the well-organized and successful systems, if we heed the advice of Lowell Martin<sup>1</sup> will probably be organized with

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urban libraries as their nuclei of strength. And, since these systems will, hopefully, conform to the general standards for public library service and offer the same kinds of services offered by systems which serve only urban areas, it might reasonably be questioned why a discussion of the problems of financing rural public library systems should be different in any way from a discussion of the financing of urban ones.

It is my own conviction that a number of distinctions can be made which will show that, while their problems are similar in some ways, there are differences of sufficient extent for us to distinguish between them with validity. I will elaborate upon this point wherever appropriate in the ensuing discussion, which is arranged to consider the factors which influence the financing of rural library systems, the social climate which controls such financing, the special problems presented by the inclusion of a number of discrete units of local government in the tax base for such libraries, and in conclusion some ideas concerning the various sources of support and the reasons therefor.

### Some Factors Which Influence Financing

The first factor which I should like to point out is the high probability that virtually all support for public libraries will come from tax funds. Endowment funds are not, and have not been in this century, a major source of income for any but a very few public libraries, and the percentage of library income from this source continues to decline. Fines and rentals customarily are regarded not as means of support but rather as devices for the control of materials, and frequently do not remain under library custody but are turned in to become part of the general funds of local government. Other proposals for the public library to "pay its way," notably the proposal made by Charles Armstrong<sup>2</sup> in his paper for the Public Library Inquiry, have never been taken seriously by the library profession and are certainly in conflict with the basic principle of free public library service as we know it.

One important point made by Armstrong in his report is this:

A first significant fact with regard to public library finance is its insignificance--in relation to the whole governmental budget. . . . If we turn to the place that public library expenditures occupy in the total annual expenditures for all purposes, public and private, in the United States, library support is too small to be separately identified in any statistical returns.<sup>3</sup>

While these words were written in 1950-51, the more

recent statistical data do not change the picture appreciably. Public library expenditures could be doubled or trebled without requiring any significant allocation of either governmental expenditure or the gross national product.

Both of the above factors relate to the support of all libraries, but we now come to one which particularly concerns rural systems. The tax base of rural areas is made up almost entirely of real estate and personal property taxes. There are some rebates of state-collected taxes on such items as liquor, cigarettes, and portions of sales taxes in some states, which are returned to become parts of the local budgets in rural areas and may be sources of income for some rural libraries. There are also a number of reimbursable programs operating in the fields of education and welfare whereby some proportion of local expenditures in specific fields is reimbursed from state or federal funds, or from a combination of the two. While this source has been considerable in such expenditures as those for the public schools, the care of dependent children, and old age assistance, it still is not a significant source of public library support except in a very few states.

The real estate and personal property taxes are not generally regarded as "good" taxes by public administration specialists. But unless and until the units of local government which would be concerned with the support of rural public library systems have some other sources of tax funds, these taxes will remain the mainstay of tax-supported services, libraries included. And here comes a real difference between the urban and rural areas. Urban areas, in addition to their extensive compact residential sections, usually include substantial business and industrial installations which customarily carry a higher valuation per acre for tax purposes than do residential sections. This customarily provides a higher per capita tax base for the support of all services than would be found in rural areas where businesses are small and where almost the only industry is agriculture. With the exception of wartime, this century has seen agriculture in the general position of not receiving returns on investment and labor comparable to national averages, and this in spite of rather massive amounts of federal subsidy. (Note: A careful analysis of statistics is said to show that most of the subsidy has really benefited the handlers and processors rather than the growers.)

While the existence of oil wells, iron mines, and similar tax producers in a few areas does not invalidate this general statement, there is another factor worth considering here. In the post-World-War-II period there has been a conscious move-

ment toward the dispersal of industry into less vulnerable concentrations. This movement has resulted in the growth of industry in smaller centers, as contrasted with the earlier high concentration in metropolitan areas. But these smaller cities are urban within the definition of this paper, and the movement gives little promise of affecting the tax base in the truly rural areas with which we are concerned here. Perhaps it is interesting to note some recent reactions to this movement. The spokesman of a large firm recently made a statement which was reported in the newspapers to the effect that his firm, which moved its principal operations far out into suburbia some years ago, has decided that it prefers being back in the central city. He gave three reasons for this decision: the greater ease of securing qualified personnel to work in the central city, the greater ease of getting personnel to and from the place of employment when it is located centrally, and the desirable public relations aspect of "higher visibility" in the downtown area. If this becomes a trend, decentralization may well become even less important to rural areas than it is now.

Certainly one factor which further differentiates the rural side of the library picture from the urban is that in many rural areas there is nothing to start with, whereas very nearly all urban communities already have established libraries and are spending some money on library support. In fact, many of these, while their budgets are too small for them to offer any visible level of library service as independent units, could, if the same money were spent within the framework of a larger system, be receiving service which would approach or fully meet current standards. In this sense, the system budget would not have to be all new money. In other words, while the problem in most urban areas becomes one of persuading people to spend tax funds, which they are already spending, more wisely, the problem in rural areas often becomes one of persuading people to create new tax funds for the support of a service which they have never known.

The next factor I would mention is the fiscal requirements, or "need," to use Carl Chatters' favorite term.<sup>4</sup> Here we are on fairly safe ground in assuming that it will take the same amounts of money to provide standard public library service to rural areas as it takes to serve a similar size population in a purely urban situation. While some writers in recent years, notably those who maintain that "the bookmobile is an extremely expensive method of circulating books," have tended toward the belief that adequate rural service costs more than urban service, I do not believe that this is true, but I am equally

convinced that it will not cost less. My reasons for believing this are many, and I will give a few which I regard as the most obvious.

Let us first examine personnel costs. The rural library systems will be competing for the same professional personnel that all other libraries are, and they must offer comparable salary levels if they are to be properly staffed. I have observed a trend in recent years which might indicate that they will have to offer more. Librarians as educated people with cultural interests show increasingly a preference for the kinds of advantages (good live music, other fine arts, and congenial associations) which are found more often in urban concentrations than in rural areas. We may find that, in order to induce professionally qualified librarians to work in rural areas, we must include an amount in the salary scale which allows for the extra travel expense involved in getting to places where such opportunities are available. To offset this, it seems likely that, if library nonprofessional salaries are made comparable to the salaries of people doing similar work in other segments of the community (i.e., office receptionists, stenographers, and sales personnel), the budget requirements for nonprofessional personnel may not be as high in rural as in urban communities. It also appears likely that rural library systems may not have to pay janitors in the same salary bracket as high-level professional personnel, as some urban libraries must now do. We may assume that these aspects of the budget will more or less even themselves out.

Of course, the costs of similar or identical library materials will remain similar or identical.

Among operating costs, the bookmobile operation is the difference between urban and rural which usually gets the most attention, although it is by no means the only item of importance. A properly organized bookmobile service costs no more than a properly organized urban small branch library. The personnel (at least one professional librarian and one driver clerk) costs are similar to the personnel costs of the urban small branch. The costs of gas, oil, maintenance, and garaging are quite similar to the costs of heat, lights, other utilities, and upkeep for the branch. While the initial capital investment is much lower for the bookmobile, it repeats more frequently for the bookmobile than for the branch, and so about levels out this part of the expense. And, of course, it bears the same relationship to the managerial overhead of the system that the branch does.

An item which has received little attention in the literature is the matter of branches in rural library service. The



urban library, if wisely operated, can plan its branch system in order to give the maximum coverage of its compact area with maximum accessibility to the greatest number of people. It is not impossible for a single branch to have 40,000 or more people within a one-mile or ten-block radius. There are many rural areas in which a 20-mile radius (one-half hour driving time) will not include a total population of one-fourth as many people. The current trend toward larger farms with fewer people operating and working on them will only intensify this problem. However, if we are to maintain any reasonable standard of accessibility of service, we are going to have to operate stationary libraries in many locations where the potential for population to be served is much lower than urban branches usually have. Realistically, we must recognize that these libraries will be manned for the most part by nonprofessional personnel, since the exigencies of the situation will require us to use local personnel. Therefore, although these rural systems may show a larger proportion of nonprofessional personnel than do urban systems, any apparent differential in cost will probably be erased by the need for giving adequate professional guidance and supervision to such locations, which will entail expenditures for travel and other items. The idea of having a staff professional who alternates in serving as local librarian in a number of places is just beginning to be tried, and so far as I am able to learn there have been no adequate reports on either the costs or the effectiveness of this method.

This brings us to the last of the factors which influence the financing of rural library systems, or perhaps to the first element in "climate"--whichever you prefer. This is something that everyone working toward the establishment of rural public libraries has observed. Most rural people do not know what real public library service is, and accordingly have little or no conception of what it can mean to them--do for them, if you will. Where the rural areas contain any appreciable number of people who have lived in the service area of a fine urban library system and who have learned to value it and to use it, it becomes relatively easy (I said relatively--not just easy) to locate enthusiastic and capable leadership for the library establishment movement. If, however, we are going to have to demonstrate to all people within a rural area to convince them that the public library is a good thing to have, it is going to take us a long, long time to make any significant progress toward our goal of public library service for everyone.

There may be some mitigation of this situation in the growing educational level of the rural resident. Any significant



educational experience outside the rural locality will probably include the use of libraries, and where and if people with such experience return to make their lives in rural areas, we may secure from them the local leadership necessary to make the establishment of public library service a reality.

### The Social Climate

It is obvious from the above that we have already begun looking at one of the elements in the social climate which controls the support provided to public library systems in rural areas. Upon closer look, it becomes obvious that unless rural people, in quantity, want public library service and indicate their willingness to provide financial support for it, they are never going to get it. I will never forget a remark by Leon Carnovsky in one of his lectures at the University of Chicago Graduate Library School to the effect that "every one who deserves public library service has it, and those who deserve good service have good service." I can also vividly recall my disagreement with his statement. I think that what he meant was that public libraries have in the past depended almost entirely on local initiative for their establishment and support, that people with initiative and the willingness to provide the appropriate support had already attained the distinction of having library service. My disagreement was at that time based on my conviction that most people without public libraries were in rural areas, and that most of them did not yet know that the library profession had solved the problem of providing them with good public library service at a "reasonable" cost, that is, without a disproportionate share of either their taxes or their annual incomes.

However, the fact remains that many rural residents still do not know what a public library can mean to them, and most are not yet informed on how they can go about obtaining it when they do know what it means and have decided that they want it.

But in addition to this lack of experience, knowledge, and understanding, there is the economic factor. I can still hear the earnest voice of a gentleman who came to one of our meetings where we explained the Minnesota program for rural library development under our Library Services Act Plan. He came up to me in the "kaffeeklatsch" which customarily follows such meetings in our part of the country and said, "If only we had had this program five years ago. At that time, the farmers were so prosperous they would have voted for it like a shot. But now, well I don't know." I have already mentioned the ba-

sic fact that agriculture has not shared in the general prosperity of our country except in wartime. In fact, while virtually all other segments of our economy have enjoyed high levels of prosperity in recent years, agriculture has experienced what amounts to a major recession--not a real agricultural depression like that witnessed by this country between 1923 and the late 1930's, but a real recession nevertheless. This is unquestionably the principal factor in the addition of any new service to what people regard as an already heavy tax burden. You and I know, and statistics prove, that the public library tax burden in the United States is infinitesimal, but in a social climate what people believe to be true is true, or for all practical purposes might as well be. A recent poll (the Minnesota Poll conducted regularly by the Minneapolis Tribune) gives us a quotable quote which has a bearing here: "There are few who are not automatically in favor of lower taxes." The pollsters might have added that there are many who are automatically opposed to any additions to present taxes. In securing any measure of local support for new rural public library systems, whatever tax funds are allocated to the library are going to be "new" or "additional" taxes.

Still another element in the support picture is the general climate of taxes: the kinds and their allocation. Most library support, as noted earlier, has been found to come from the property (real and personal) tax. Some areas, notably Ohio with its intangibles tax on which libraries have a substantial first claim and Michigan with its penal fines devoted to county libraries, are the exceptions rather than the rule; and the library results in both states have been far from uniform. The intangibles tax produces very substantial revenue for libraries in some localities, only slight amounts in others; the penal fines appear to be substantial in only a few counties where traffic is heavy, or which are apparently not very law-abiding. Although both of these revenue sources have been with us for a number of years, they are under repeated challenge in their respective states and there appears to be little tendency on the part of other states to adopt them.

Contemporary public administration thinking generally is opposed to the principle of instituting a specific tax for a specified purpose. Gasoline and tire taxes devoted entirely to highways notwithstanding, it is generally believed that the proceeds of such taxes usually bear little relationship to the financial requirements of the service to be supported, and in some cases their existence has militated against the service's receiving its due share from the total public revenue.

In this connection, how I wish that long ago when cigarette taxes were being adopted one cent of this tax on "sin" had been devoted entirely to public libraries. If such had happened, we would now have all the money we need to run all the libraries in the country on a more than adequate basis. However, I repeat that the institution of such "devoted" taxes would be against both the principles and the trends of current tax development.

All this means that libraries in the main will probably have to continue asking for their funds from general revenue sources (principally the property tax at the local level) and be forced to look toward those levels of government having the stronger taxing authority if libraries are to be adequately supported in the future.

### The Special Problem of the Variety of Governmental Units

The Brookings Institution came out many years ago with a series of findings showing that our present units of government are antiquated as being too small for efficient operation in our present times. The findings pointed a special finger at the county (or town in New England) showing that these (certainly the counties) were based on the principle that any citizen should be able to reach the county seat, transact his business, pay his taxes, satisfy other of his legal or fiscal requirements, or serve his term at jury duty, and return home within a single day. There is now hardly an area in the United States where a grouping of counties would not satisfy this requirement. Indeed, in many states it is quite simple to go to the state capitol, transact any necessary business, and return home easily the same day. The recommendation growing out of such findings was to combine counties into a greatly reduced number of administrative districts retaining the many jurisdictions and functions now reserved for counties (or towns) and adding a number of other appropriate functions for which the district could serve most adequately as the jurisdiction intermediate between the state and its cities and villages. Incidentally, such a move was deemed a possible solution to the great problem of metropolitan government facing us today.

I recall quite vividly the effect that such recommendations had in one state. The adoption of the proposal would have meant many fewer sheriffs, county clerks, and petty functionaries. The "court house crowd" rose up in arms, and at one time it appeared doubtful that the legislature would even authorize payment for the report. Needless to say, the proposal got buried; and I doubt if many people even know of the existence of

the report, let alone its recommendations.

Someday perhaps we will have a sensible solution to this problem, but until such a day, the formation of larger library units will involve the participation of a number of governmental jurisdictions in most cases. Even in those cases where a single county is large enough to be a single unit, it seems there will always be some cities or villages (having previously established small public libraries) which will prefer joining by agreement (with all sorts of clauses to protect their local autonomy) rather than by the simpler expedient of turning the library over lock, stock, and barrel to the newer larger unit.

Getting an agreement on how such a larger unit will operate is one thing; getting agreement on how much each unit will contribute to its support is another. Probably the biggest single problem here is the inequality of assessments between governmental units. Where townships (each one has assessing responsibilities) are involved, the problem is enormous, for even in those areas where the setting of assessments is a county responsibility, we can find that one county bases its assessments on a quite different scale of values than does its neighbor. Moreover, there are the special differences brought in by such factors as homestead exemptions or the special treatment of industry.

Some states have taken the forward step of adopting a statewide equalized assessed valuation which serves as the basis of distributing costs of any service supported on the basis of units larger than the one having responsibility for fixing assessments. This assures equal treatment on sharing of costs, although it may take a widely varying tax rate among the units themselves to produce the revenue required. The movement toward such equalized assessments is a gradual one, and someday this question may be solved for us; but until such a time as it is universal practice, many of us will be faced by problems arising out of differential rates of assessment among the units we are seeking to combine.

But an even more important consideration in the matter of multiple-unit support is that of how to determine the "fair share" of each. The simplest to administer is a uniform tax rate, but as we have already seen this can be considerably skewed by a differential in assessments. Another relatively simple expedient is a uniform per capita contribution from each unit. This has serious disadvantages. A unit containing a single large industrial installation might be expected to be a major source of support for the system, but if it has a small population, with



most of the industrial workers coming from residential areas located in other taxing units, the disproportion in taxation would be enormous. It would also be a regressive tax, since tax-paying areas would not be supporting the unit in proportion to their ability to do so.

It is nevertheless important to remember that factors like these--as well as others we might never have thought of, both inside and outside the areas of politics, prejudice, or pride--will enter into any proposal or negotiation toward combining smaller governmental units into single large library operating units.

### A Recapitulation

Let us pause here for a brief recapitulation of what we have considered thus far.

We have observed the following characteristics of financing public library services in rural areas:

The fiscal needs of rural library services are about the same per capita as are the needs of urban services.

The support of such libraries will continue to be almost entirely from tax funds.

The fiscal needs of libraries are an insignificant proportion of public funds and a virtually invisible portion of national income.

The principal tax resource of rural areas is the real estate and property tax, which is one of the weakest--not a "good" tax from the point of view of ability to pay--and which rests on a tax base which is generally lower in rural than in urban areas.

Average incomes in rural areas are much lower than those in urban areas, and there is no evidence that this differential will be removed in the foreseeable future.

It appears probable that the major tax resource of rural areas will continue to be the real estate and property tax.

And we have also observed that the social climate which controls library income has two important elements:



There is a general lack of understanding in rural areas of the importance and benefits of having good public library service.

There is a growing opposition to any increases in property taxes.

Finally, we have observed that the problem of achieving larger library systems in rural areas is compounded by the necessity of combining a number of governmental units before such systems can be effectively organized and supported.

### The Effects of LSA

The impact on public library support in the United States made over the past five years by the Library Services Act has been substantial. It is my conviction, based on an informed guess, that this impact has been felt even by libraries too large to be eligible to benefit directly from LSA. As for rural library service, I have made some attempt to arrive at an estimate of the amount of direct increase in state and local funds for this purpose, but despite the warm cooperation of the heads of all state library agencies, I cannot give even a reasonably accurate sum.

However, the Library Services Branch has furnished me with the most recent percentage increases, which are statistically more important than actual figures. At the state level there are two states which have increased funds for rural public libraries by more than 200 per cent, another 10 by more than 100 per cent, another 10 by more than 75 per cent and still another six by more than 50 per cent. Thus, more than half the states show an increase of more than 50 per cent. The amounts of these increases are unrelated to the percentages, since the states started from different levels, but they range from under \$100,000 into the millions.

Local funds have not increased as rapidly by percentage, but again half the states show an increase of more than 50 per cent in the five years. This increase, however, represents a substantially higher sum of money, since the starting base was higher. Just as an example, the Minnesota increase of 216 per cent in state funds amounts to only \$130,000; the local increase, while only 38 per cent, amounts to around half a million.

I think the point to emphasize here is that a modest amount of federal money has stimulated highly significant increases in state and local moneys in a relatively short time.

What is more, the results of the stimulation are growing rapidly.

### Some Implications

And so we come to the question, "What does all this mean to the future support of public libraries, especially those serving rural areas?"

Let us face three readily provable facts: (1) the population of the United States at the present time is something over 180 million; (2) current public funds for public library service are in the neighborhood of \$200 million; and (3) the costs of adequate library service in the most efficiently organized larger systems are at the present just above \$3.00 per capita.

In other words, at the present level of population in the United States, adequate library support would come out to be roughly \$540 million, so that we are currently over \$300 million short of having enough money to run our public libraries even if all were organized on the most desirable possible basis; with the population increases currently projected, our requirements will be over \$600 million during the professional lifetime of most of us gathered here, if the entire country is to be adequately served.

Of the monies already being spent, at the present time around \$7.5 million comes from LSA (i.e., federal) funds, a somewhat smaller amount from the state funds, and the rest from local taxes. This means that local taxes are now furnishing well above 90 per cent of public library support, which in turn represents only about 43 per cent of the amount needed to provide adequate service for the 155 million people presently counted as served by public libraries--if all present service were organized on that most desirable basis, which we all very well know is not yet so.

If all the presently unserved population were to support a public library service with local funds in the same proportion that those now served do, the unserved areas would furnish just above \$32 million of additional funds, bringing the total of local funds to around \$220 million.

Where will the rest (approximately \$320 million) of public funds needed for total adequate public library service in the United States come from?

### An Exploration of Solutions

Although the above-mentioned \$32 million of additional local funds would probably have to come in the most part from

property taxes, I believe that this is as much as we could hope for from such a source--and it may well be that the gradually declining strength of this tax source may require a downward revision of even that figure. To what tax sources, then, should we look for the remaining \$320 million?

One of the facts of fiscal governmental life is that the strongest income-producing taxes now rest in the hands of the federal government, and that the next strongest are at state level. There is no indication that this situation will not continue; indeed, there is some indication that taxes from both these sources will increase in strength while the relative strength of local taxes will decline. In the light of the foregoing, it behooves us to consider the possibility that a much larger share of public library support in the future will come from state or federal sources, or from a combination of the two.

Any number of writers and speakers have in the past proposed various formulas for the sources of library support ranging all the way from 100 per cent to as high as 40 per cent state and federal, or perhaps higher. There is still a bugaboo about state or federal control. While it cannot be dismissed as a figment of the imagination because such programs do set standards for the administration and expenditure of funds and some standards of performance, the long history of state aid to the public schools and our own experience with the Library Services Act should dispel our fears along these lines and should be useful in dispelling the fears of local library and governmental officials.

Let us look for a moment to one of our neighbors. The Provincial Government of Saskatchewan, in a fine and rapidly developing program for public library development, is doing three admirable things: it makes establishment grants to those larger units which serve rural as well as urban areas, it erects a building to serve as the headquarters of such a unit, and it makes a continuing annual grant of 75 cents per capita to its regional libraries. If such a policy were general in the United States, state aids would be at a level of around \$135 million in this country, rather than the present amount which is less than five per cent of that. This \$135 million is less than one-fiftieth of what is now granted from state sources for the support of public schools. It seems to me the public library is important enough as an adult educational institution to warrant the states' making grants to the extent of two per cent of the amount allocated to local school districts. Unfortunately, the public library has so often permitted itself to become primarily a service to children that it is not recognized as an adult educational insti-

tution by very many people. Recent notable efforts to correct this situation have appeared in the national publicity stimulated by National Library Week. But we still have a long way to go before the general public and the appropriations authorities who are drawn from that general public accept the importance of the public library to adult education as a matter of course. (As an aside here: It is my conviction that our newly established larger units should concentrate their efforts in adult education services from the beginning. The old myth that concentrating on children's services is bringing up a generation of adult users is exploded when it is realized that such libraries rarely if ever have anything for that generation when it does become adult, and they lose potential users in droves right at the age level when the children are acquiring adult library interests.)

I hope there is no one here who feels that we cannot on rational grounds defend the principle that the state has a concern and responsibility for public library service which justifies its providing a modest level of state support for this purpose, at least to the extent of a small percentage of what they provide as aid to schools. I certainly feel that we can. And since most states wisely set minimum levels of local support to qualify for school aid, state library agencies would be wise to do the same. Some kind of equalizing factor also is usually present in state aid programs for schools, with the result that such programs represent a greater proportion of school expenditures in those areas with large numbers of educable age children and low per capita tax base than they represent in areas with fewer children and a higher tax base. I believe that this same principle should apply to state aid programs for public libraries, now and for the future. Just to pull a figure off the top of my head (but a figure which I assure you bears a close resemblance to the percentage of school aids now in effect) such programs would provide approximately an equal amount to that provided by local funds, which was estimated as you will recall at approximately \$220 million. This leaves a balance of approximately \$100 million to be raised if public library service at an adequate level is to be available to every American.

### The Role of the Federal Government

The federal government has in principle traditionally shown a concern for the education of its citizens. While the amount of money involved has not been a significant proportion of federal expenditures, the programs themselves have achieved a significance far out of proportion to amount of money involved.



We need only cite the Morrill Act and the Library Services Act, one of the oldest and one of the newest, to prove this point.

The federal government has a tremendous advantage in being able to collect taxes where the money is and to spend the proceeds where the need is. Therefore, it should not be considered irrational, although it might be considered overly optimistic, to say that the remaining \$100 million required for adequate public library service should come from federal funds. Competent librarians, working with governmental theorists and with favorably minded members of Congress, should be able to work out a fair distribution of such funds just as they have done with the Library Services Act and many another service program in which federal funds have participated in the past and are participating at present.

The partnership of the federal and state governments working with local government for the development of public library service has worked so phenomenally well in the last five years that it behooves all of us to urge an expansion of the present small scale effort into a program which could assure good public library service for every one. The \$100 million represents only a tiny fraction of the cost of many of the other social services already supported in part by the federal government. Why not libraries?

### Conclusion

We have faced the fact that there must be a substantial increase in the amount of public funds spent for public library service if every citizen of our country is to have adequate service. Using some generalizations, which I feel are valid, especially as regards the relative taxing strength of the governmental units, I have arrived at a proposal that the support of public library systems be provided on an approximate basis of 40 per cent local funds, 40 per cent state funds, and 20 per cent federal funds.

It appears to me that to ask for an expenditure of \$3.00 per capita of the United States for public library service, with some built-in method of equalizing through state and federal funds, is not an exorbitant request. Indeed, in the light of what this country spends for such amenities as bridge, baseball, bowling, and beer, what we are asking for is a trifling amount.

Regardless of the formula, or the source of the funds, we must return to the fact that, if the job of providing adequate public library service for all is going to be done, there must be very nearly a trebling of financial support. It is clear that to achieve this, we must do several things. First of all, we



must convince ourselves that we have not been aggressive enough in seeking tax support for the agency for which we are responsible; secondly, we must realize that we may have to change some of our own practices before we can convince the public and public officials that our agency is worth supporting to the extent that its practical necessities demand; last but not least, we must conduct an unrelenting campaign at all levels of government for the funds required if we or our successors are to realize our modest goal of adequate public library service for everyone.

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## RESEARCH, FOR WHAT?

S. Gilbert Prentiss

"Research" is rapidly becoming one of the hardest-working words in our contemporary vocabulary. In our daily references to research we may mean anything--from the assignment a second grader carries home from school to a multimillion dollar project relating to our national defense effort. Yet a biochemist doing fundamental research in cell growth would probably be quite unhappy at calling either of these activities research, because neither is primarily concerned with the discovery of new facts at the growing tip of knowledge.

Turning to Webster for some much needed help, we find research defined as: "1. a careful search; a close searching. 2. studious inquiry; usually critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation having for its aim the revision of accepted conclusions, in the light of newly discovered facts." Certainly we are given a great deal of latitude here, and for our purposes the term "studious inquiry" would seem to serve well enough.

Library research, by the nature of the questions that it concerns itself with, falls largely in the realm of applied research. And who is to say where a survey leaves off and research begins? For the purposes of this discussion, then, we shall not exclude studious inquiries of any kind, whether they involve a survey, a study, or a demonstration as the vehicle of research.

### Why Library Research?

In some respects the institution of research in our times is very much like the institution of motherhood. Even if one were against it, he would scarcely dare admit it. I am sure, however, that the case for library research will stand

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on its own merits.

In A National Plan for Public Library Service Carleton Joeckel and Amy Winslow have this to say:

Research is an indispensable foundation for library planning and for the development of library services. It identifies needs and discovers methods of meeting them. It evaluates the results achieved by library programs. Library objectives, the frame-work of organization, techniques, service procedures--in determining all of these, research is useful and essential.<sup>1</sup>

It may often seem to the library administrator, when he is desperate for the means to provide basic library materials, that library research definitely belongs in the category of a luxury, to be pursued only after the basic library services have been taken care of with some degree of adequacy.

On the surface this makes good sense. Yet industry, which does not voluntarily spend money it does not expect to get back in one way or another, is currently spending over \$10 billion a year on research and development, and even more significantly is steadily increasing the percentage of expenditures which it is pouring into research and development. (It is worth noting that this expenditure was less than half the present amount only five years ago.)

No one could feel more strongly than I that change for the mere sake of change is shoddy, extravagant, and destructive of basic social values. Constructive change, however, providing necessary adjustments to rapidly changing social forces, and employing the best social and physical inventions of the day, is not only good but necessary to effective library service. Without belittling in any way the magnificent job that libraries are doing, and fully recognizing the dramatic increase in library-related research over the past few years, we still have every evidence that vastly more emphasis should be placed on research simply in order to make minimum adjustments to the world our libraries serve.

To be more specific, I should like to suggest several research needs which grow out of conditions and pressures that are very real to us in New York State, as I am sure they are in other states. What little research we have been able to bring to bear on them serves more to convince us further of their urgency and complexity than to present final solutions.

There is, for example, a very pressing need for the development of new structures and devices for effecting cooperation among different types of libraries. The tradition of informal cooperation, which has served us so well in the past,

simply cannot cope with the exponential generation of information which is so characteristic of our times, and the attendant need to make this information readily accessible to any person, anywhere. Means must be found to systematize and formalize relationships among public, college and university, special, and even school libraries, so that these institutions may effectively share the responsibility for serving the total reference and research community, at the same time they serve their own specialized clienteles. Solutions to this highly complicated problem will come only through studies, demonstrations, and experimentation.

Another area where considerable library research is already being carried on, but where the possibilities and demands are almost limitless, is in the application of modern technology to library methods and procedures. Both in the development of new machinery to perform library functions, and in the application of devices already in use in other fields, there exist possibilities which could well revolutionize many aspects of librarianship. In most of these developments, such as, for example, the use of electronic devices for the storage and retrieval of information, libraries have had very little to do with what progress has taken place thus far, and one can easily imagine libraries as we know them being completely usurped in certain respects by information centers developed quite apart from the traditional library movement. Again, library research is the only hope for catching up with a world that needs information services so critically that it will develop its own ways of meeting the problem if libraries fail to keep up.

A third research need, very much upon us, is to evaluate our library systems in terms of their impact on library users. I am sure an evaluation would have profound implications for other states, as it certainly would for New York State. We know what library systems do for member libraries, and to the extent that they offer direct services we know a little of what systems do for users, but we are a long way from having the part of the story we most need.

You do not have to be told that one of the greatest obstacles to such an evaluation of the actual use which people make of libraries is the lack of even the most elementary units of measure for this purpose. We need desperately to devise ways of measuring both the quantity and the quality of library use--for establishing costs in connection with contract services, for comparing services, for measuring growth, for justifying budgets, and for many other purposes. We are much too prone to measure our libraries in terms of per capita expenditures, or

number of trained staff, or other units which are truly only means for serving users, rather than getting down to the essential business of measuring their actual use by people.

### The Nature of Research

If it were necessary to labor further the case for research, each of the problems outlined here could easily be subdivided into other distinct and urgent research projects, and each of these in turn would suggest others. I think, however, it would be more useful to share with you now two or three observations about the nature of library research which have a bearing on the proposals I shall presently make.

I should like to submit, first, that research is much more than surveys or questionnaires, whose only purpose can be to gather factual data. Most of us have firmly fixed in our minds an image of the research worker in his laboratory, surrounded by test tubes, computers, and blackboards full of complicated mathematical formulas. Happily, in real life the most productive kind of library research often occurs simply as an imaginative reexamination of existing knowledge. The genius of the true research worker is his ability to define his problem, and to interpret meanings and see relationships in the material available to him. His best tool in this kind of studious inquiry is an imagination that is informed and disciplined, but essentially creative. I am sure, for example, that some of the most significant standards that appear in the still exciting and tremendously important Public Library Service, published by the ALA in 1956,<sup>2</sup> were arrived at through a combination of quite commonplace information, simple arithmetic, and again, imagination.

If imagination is as important to research as I think it is, it follows that administrative and operational pressures are the enemies of creative research. One of the best reasons for setting up a research project may be to make it possible for some person or persons to be divorced from daily operational pressures in order to apply themselves creatively to a problem and stay with it until a good answer is found. As further witness to the incompatibility of research and administration, no one will ever know how many truly wonderful ideas have been wasted because they were first presented to administrators whose vision was restricted by the prospect of annoying problems in applying the ideas to their particular situations, causing them simply to discard the ideas as "impractical."

One more observation about research is in order. All applied research, and probably most fundamental research, pro-



ceeds from some kind of an assumption. If you don't think so, try setting up a research project without making some basic assumptions--assumptions that will inevitably have a critical bearing on the direction the research takes. If the assumptions make good sense the research may make good sense, but if the assumptions do not make sense it will be only an accident if the research does. No amount of data, or manipulation of data, will make up for basic errors or inadequacies in the fundamental assumptions from which the research proceeds.

### Recommendations

At this point, having generalized, deplored, and admonished at considerable length, I should like to make some assumptions. I would like to assume that most of us are agreed on the following points: what we mean by library research; that library research is vitally important; that we are doing far too little library research; and that productive library research must proceed from sound and imaginative assumptions. I should then like to move on to a suggestion which is the thesis of my entire argument. In the interests of clarity I have broken this proposal into three parts, the order of which is immaterial. These are as follows:

1. The federal government could make no greater contribution to library development in the United States than to direct the major share of its efforts and resources into library research and grants for library research.

2. Since it is becoming increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to separate the problems of large libraries from small libraries, or urban libraries from rural libraries, even as it is becoming less and less feasible to separate the basic interests of public libraries from academic, special, or school libraries, the research program should concern itself with all kinds of libraries.

3. The research program should proceed from a bold overall plan, or framework of assumptions, that recognizes the essential totality of all library resources and objectives, and acknowledges the necessity for defining all library needs and functions in terms of appropriate levels of government and whatever nongovernmental agencies are involved.

### The Responsibilities of the Federal Government

There are many sound and obvious reasons why library research is a natural function of the federal government. To name a few that come immediately to mind:

1. The federal government, by virtue of its overview

of libraries and library operations, and its position of national leadership and prestige, would hold a unique advantage in conducting, and especially in developing and coordinating, a national research program.

2. The federal government is large enough so that it could employ a full-time research staff. In contrast to the necessarily sporadic research efforts at other levels of government, which invariably perform research on a brinkmanship basis, this would provide a much-to-be-desired continuity. It would also mean that the staff could be persons trained in research, and free from administrative and operational pressures.

3. Generally speaking, the most successful public services are those services performed at the most appropriate and "natural" level of government. To apply this principle to the research function, a particular piece of library research usually needs to be performed only once in the United States. It is, therefore, most logical for the federal government to conduct it, and then to make the results available to all libraries to which it is pertinent.

4. Many research projects will involve a number of libraries and may necessitate the crossing of state boundaries. In these circumstances, the federal government is in the best position to conduct such projects.

5. The federal government is the central, and therefore most logical, agency to collect statistical data from libraries and to standardize these data.

6. A considerable amount of much-needed library research should involve other national and international agencies with which the federal government would be in the best position to deal.

Library research is of course presently conducted by many different agencies: the Library Services Branch of the Office of Education, the state library agencies, the library schools, the American Library Association and a few other state and regional professional associations, a number of foundations, and many individual libraries. It is healthy and proper to have this wide participation in research. Of all these agencies, however, there is most to be said for the major research responsibility resting with the federal government.

### Looking at Today's Library Research

A look at library research projects financed by LSA funds serves only to bear out our earlier misgivings. There is naturally much that is worthwhile--the various state surveys in particular are resulting in programs that take cognizance of

the realities of today's needs and trends--but we are forced to admit that the total effort, looked at as a whole, is fragmentary, parochial, and inadequate.

Most significant of the research projects financed wholly or in part by LSA funds are the ten or so statewide studies of library services. Some 15 other LSA-financed studies break down roughly as follows: four on social factors influencing library development, three on aspects of public relations, two on structure and government, two on aspects of technical processing, one on finance, one on library development, one on training, and one on professional periodicals. There are, of course, other useful studies not financed by, but related to, LSA--the current ALA study of state library agencies being an outstanding example--but the story is a meager one at best.

I am sure it is fair to say that even as our thinking about libraries should reflect our research, so should our library research reflect our thinking about libraries. If this is true, I hesitate to draw the obvious parallel.

We have come now, in a very real and critical sense, to a time for meeting the great needs, and for taking the whole look. By nothing short of an effective mobilization of our total library resources can we begin to make the contribution that libraries are worthy of and that our communities and our world in turn demand from our libraries. In our approach to the problem of research we will undoubtedly have to move step by step--even dealing separately with problems of the rural and the urban, of techniques and structure--but each step must be part of a plan, not an isolated tinkering with whatever bits or pieces come to hand. We must conceive our research and draw our conclusions in the context of this plan.

I am not certain how we should go about developing this plan, or even whose responsibility it is; it would surely seem that those agencies with the broadest point of view--the ALA, the Library Services Branch, and the state agencies--should play a major role. At various stages in our library history we have taken the pains to draw such a statement of where we wanted to go and how we planned to get there. A major effort in this direction was A National Plan for Public Library Service, prepared for the ALA Committee on Postwar Planning and published by ALA in 1948.<sup>3</sup> In 1956 we had the new public library standards, which are still sound and forward-looking. John Eastlick has made a much more recent contribution in his Special Report for the Federal Relations Committee of the ALA Library Administration Division, The Sixties and After.<sup>4</sup> But the world is moving very fast, and for one reason

or another all of these documents fall short of providing us with a framework for the new concepts and the direction which we need so much. We need now a truly imaginative new plan, a plan which itself is capable of growing and evolving, which both sets up the guideposts for library research and at the same time takes its directions from research.

It is my conviction that only in so doing will we carry on truly meaningful library research, or that we will realize the tremendous potential of the federal government for serving the library cause.

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## LSA AND THE FUTURE

Ralph Blasingame, Jr.

To attempt some guess as to the future--whatever the context--requires that one pay some service to the past. The strength of the position which the public library occupies today and upon which its future will be based is a tribute to past generations. We inherit a high moral position which has made it possible for high-minded people to join with us in the drive to bring library services to all parts of our states and to improve those which already exist. Whatever paths we take must preserve this position so that our successors may have that same advantage.

As to the ideas which will be mentioned in this talk, none is either new or my own in any real sense. I shall try only to bring together thoughts which are drawn from reading and experience. Perhaps this group may develop some truly new plans, though we have far to go if we only follow the directions which Joeckel, Martin, Leigh, Eastlick, and others have pointed out.

Librarians face a period of exceptionally hard work and of adjustment to the notion that libraries are a popular topic with the public generally and with legislators--at least in some places. This popularity seems to be filtering down from the top. That downward movement from the Congress to state legislatures to local governments is at odds with all we preach about the public library as a phenomenon of a democratic culture, a responsibility first of town and county.

Perhaps this interest from the top is merely a result of an increasing tendency to generate governmental programs at a federal or state level. It may be--and I prefer this explanation--that the professional librarians have merely been more successful in describing their vision of library service

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in an atmosphere where professionalization is becoming the norm rather than the exception.

The professional view of the public library is strongly colored by the relative handful of outstanding libraries. The public view of the public library is commonly quite different. It is strongly colored by the many miserably inadequate libraries which are the average state library's everyday business. The public, furthermore, is concerned almost solely with services; the librarian must also be concerned with structure. I do not suggest that you do not know this nor that the professional view should be changed. I do suggest that this divergence has perhaps kept the profession at large from making meaningful contact with the public at large.

Despite the unfortunate public image--or, perhaps, because of it--the public wishes for more and better libraries. Unfocused, sporadic, and ill-defined, this wish is strong and growing stronger. Our future (the future of library services) depends to a great extent upon focusing the public's interest, helping to even out its cycles, and defining for it the programs of tomorrow. We have barely begun to realize the public support which we may now gain.

Perhaps, then, the most important job ahead for the state library agency is to lay such plans as will bring together all of the people and groups who are interested in books, reading, and the growth of educational opportunity. As Joeckel put the matter:

In their efforts to serve the people of America, the library forces, to use a military analogy, are fighting a disjointed battle on a whole series of disconnected fronts. In some manner these isolated detachments must be consolidated, united, and strengthened and made to advance on a broad front to common, well-defined objectives.<sup>1</sup>

The chief administrator of the state agency must be willing to look into the future and must have the courage and energy to work toward what he sees, in concert with those parts of the public he can identify as friendly forces.

Now, to try to be more specific. ✓ One trend which seems clear is that state library agencies are beginning to move from a position of leadership by indirection to one of leadership by direct action. This move has taken various forms, and I can bear witness that this shift in position is a difficult process. It will be realized only where genuine agreement can be achieved among professional and civic groups as to what authority is to be vested in the state and what is to be reserved to other units of government. This agreement must be based upon

tangible programs in the general public interest, not on good intentions or some vague good or administrative tidiness.

State libraries have traditionally been advisors and have worked more with small libraries than with large libraries. We must now change this approach: the cities are losing population--at least in the East--and are also losing their traditional tax base to a degree, at least. They must be brought to realize that the day is coming rapidly when they will need the suburbs and rural areas as now the rural areas need them. Thus, the state librarian must work in the future with the cities. For this, and other reasons, I believe that the task of recruiting state library staff will grow more and more critical.

If this restatement of the position of the state library agency is, indeed, desirable, then overall review of the legal structure within the state for the establishment, operation, and financing of public and state libraries is necessary. Some review of library law should, of course, be under way at all times. However, comprehensive review at intervals of perhaps ten years seems desirable. It is painfully time-consuming, this review, but it will offer opportunities to eliminate contradictions, to introduce new ideas, and to keep the law alive. The realization of our ideas as to changes in the unit of service, financing, and other vital matters will often depend upon whether or not the law permits change. If Pennsylvania's experience is a true guide, review of the law should start with the active support of the Attorney General. Involvement of a good law school will also be wise.

A change in state law can sometimes attract the attention of groups who cannot make rapid progress locally. Here, public interest can crystallize perhaps more readily than in the town or county.

If the state library is to lead by direct action, it will become more or less directly involved in local library programs. This is a very sensitive area, as I need not say to you. The nature and extent of involvement will vary, but the Library Services Act provides one approach to this matter which has been quite successful. The submission of a plan for the use of LSA funds places the responsibility for best use of the money in the hands of each state. We believe in Pennsylvania that this general method is a good one to apply at the state-local level, and it has been incorporated into our new Library Code. Each local library wishing to receive state funds will submit a plan, and disbursement of money will follow approval of the plan. Other methods may be developed in other states, but placing responsibility for planning in local hands should stimulate badly

needed advance planning and remove the stigma of state control. At the same time, authority to approve plans should enable the state agency to exercise general direction of state-wide development programs.

Some developments of the past few years indicate clearly that we must continue to pay attention to the organization and financing of libraries. The support accorded to major state-aid programs in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania obviously points toward the encouragement of regionalization of library services through enlarged financial incentives by the state on a continuing basis. This will come as news to no one here, but the exploration and development of these ideas remain to be carried forward. Fullest possible use of all available resources will be wise. The potential use, for example, of public and private college libraries in the Pennsylvania plan is a most interesting prospect. In this respect, I should like to express my belief that federal funds in the future should be granted so as to make possible even more experimentation than has been carried on so far. The Library Services Act has made us focus on the weakest point of public library service. Experimentation at the strong points might, in the long run, be more rewarding.

As we experiment, we must keep our eyes open to developments in other governmental areas. When multistate planning achieves some success, for example, we should be prepared at least to examine it to see whether or not there are some implications for library organization. Wherever the channel ice is broken by someone else, we should follow at least far enough to see where the channel leads. Similarly, we should observe the failures of others. School districts have, at least in Pennsylvania, gone through some very uncomfortable periods; perhaps we can avoid similar periods.

This line of thought suggests to me that experimental funds might be used for limited objectives, perhaps radical in nature and not necessarily with the thought that they will result in continuing organizations. In Pennsylvania, we are experimenting with educational programs varying from unstructured discussion groups to short but formalized courses in reference work. We have also experimented briefly with the types of non-fiction materials which adults in rural areas will use. In both cases, we have gained useful information which has in one way or another affected our approaches to rural librarians and boards of trustees.

John Eastlick has said that we talk about larger units of service but librarians seem not really to want them to come

into being.<sup>2</sup> Of course, this problem is to some extent one of education. Perhaps, too, it is a prod to us to experiment in the methods of achieving the larger unit. Ways must be found to give the librarian and the board of trustees of the small library a feeling of contributing to the total resources of the area or state while retaining the dignity which local responsibility implies. If this can be done, then perhaps the library user may benefit immediately while the organizational process goes on.

Perhaps we are too concerned with structure, and thus do not see the ways in which standards may be met by developing new channels of access to existing collections. Librarians and boards of trustees may not shudder so over the national standards if shown avenues for reaching them other than administrative subordination or grossly increased local budgets. The concept of graded levels of service plus development of rapid communication within a state system should be explored.

There are many particulars which might be suggested as promising for the future. The development of service centers not only to handle the purchase and preparation of materials but also to care perhaps for other routines such as circulation control is one. Another is the potential development of electronic information centers, through the pooled efforts of perhaps an entire state or of several states. Supplying some uniform standard of basic reference tools, development of library districts or "authorities" as a form of governmental unit which can cross municipal or state lines, certification of libraries as well as librarians, and recruitment and educational programs on a scale far beyond the present are only a few of the many other possibilities.

However, attempting to speak in broad terms, I believe that technical advance will best follow--not precede--a full recognition of the place of libraries as book and information centers in a society which has apparently decided to place greater emphasis on education.

The standard problems brought to us, for example, by student use of public libraries must be solved, while, at the same time, we must see ourselves as aiding in the solution of newer problems such as the drive to retrain workers unemployed through technological change. Libraries are in the mainstream of education--and are generally unequipped for the job. I often have the feeling that the professional educators at all levels are being swept along, too, and have only the advantage that their part in what society wishes is slightly better defined than ours. Should we, in some degree at least, run with that tide? We all know the risks, yet how can a high school or col-



lege be accredited today unless public libraries are available to its students? State-level coordination of schools and libraries might yield some solutions to these difficult problems.

There are times when I wonder if the public library will survive, much less flourish. These moments pass, of course, and are usually the result of some especially rasping experience. However, it is well to point out that many public libraries could disappear tomorrow without a ripple. Their effect has been so slight that it has not been measurable in the communities they profess to serve.

The program of tomorrow is a fascinating topic for speculation, but a clear-eyed critical view of today is our first requirement. In many places and in many respects, we have only one foot in the twentieth century--and we seem at times to have got that far only by accident. Programs of review or evaluation and research should become more common. As one who has reviewed sizable portions of library literature, I can attest to its weaknesses. It is repetitive and self-congratulatory to an appalling extent. Escape from this self-justification in which we all indulge is absolutely essential before real progress can be made. Alliance between state libraries and library schools should increase; we should see the creation of research positions on state library staffs and an increase in contracted research.

There is great promise in the future. We have tradition and present opinion moving the right way. If we can maintain a sense of urgency and if we can pursue big plans, we shall see remarkable progress in the sixties.

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## LSA: A POLITICAL SCIENTIST'S VIEW

Phillip Monypenny

In my career with state libraries, I begin to feel rather like James B. Conant in his empyrean reviews of education in the United States. I would imagine that Conant is one of the most disliked men in America. He is constantly speaking on matters to which other people have given their entire lives but to which he has devoted a few years of study. I am probably the second most disliked person in the United States since after a few months of experience with state libraries and public libraries I have begun to speak as an authority on matters to which other people have devoted a lifetime of endeavor.

The reason for my being here, as you people know very well, is that I am currently the director of a study of library services in state government, sponsored by the American Library Association and financed by the Carnegie Corporation. Even before I started on this project, I began reporting on its progress. I fear that in all too many cases I have been repeating my reports to some of you patiently seated here. The consequence is that before my data are in I am gratuitously giving conclusions, which, as a conscientious social scientist, I should reserve until I have had a change to complete the study.

Let me put in an aside, however, about the habits of librarians and the method of my project. As I said earlier, I have been appearing before one gathering or another of librarians, ever since the project began. If I could have anticipated this, if I had been better briefed on some aspects of the library world at the outset, much trouble and expense could have been avoided. Then my three associates and I, instead of scouring the country by train and plane, auto and bus, into the remote fastnesses where state capitals lie, could have converged on the monthly meetings which librarians hold to make speeches at

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each other. There we could have waylaid our quarry and completed our interview schedules with a minimum of expenditure and very great convenience.

About some of the very general conclusions, however, there can be no doubt. I am impressed at the outset by the significant responsibilities of state government in the promotion and development of public library services, of school library service, and possibly even of college and university library service throughout the state. There is no other means except through the effort of state government to develop the legislation necessary to build more adequate local library units; there are no other financial resources which can mitigate the limits which dependence on the local property tax places on local library units; there is no substitute for a state agency to provide the advice, technical assistance, and moral support which local library staffs will need in the effort to transpose themselves into a new level of library service. In all of these areas, including the development of a legislative program, the state agency responsible for public library development is a most necessary part of the picture. The state library associations, no matter how well led, cannot provide the staff for these jobs which require continuous activity. Indeed, one of the important activities of a state library agency may be the care and nurture of a state association to alleviate the isolation in which so many librarians, and library units, live and work. One of our most significant conclusions, therefore, is apt to be that further library development along the lines laid out by the library profession itself will require increased staff and activity for library agencies in state government, and more state participation in the financing of local library operations. To give at least a passing glance to the topic of this talk and of this conference--the Library Services Act--the beefing up of state agencies, the increased status and resources of state agencies, may well be one of the most important results of the Act.

In this dependence for future development on participation and assistance by the state, libraries are not unique. Always excepting the large metropolitan areas, in all fields--welfare, health, highways, education--progress has been dependent on enlarged state activity in the oversight of and assistance to local units. It seems to me that the state level of government is and must be an important level of government in the whole library field, both in promotion and in financing.

I shall approach the question of the effect of the Library Services Act upon state and public library development indirectly by reviewing the general situation of public library pro-

grams in the states against the background of the standards by which the library profession tends to measure those programs. It is from the standpoint of where public libraries are in relation to where we should like them to be that accomplishments under the Library Services Act must be measured. In the account which follows, I can claim only the most superficial authority for what I have to say.

I myself, at this point, have been in perhaps half a dozen states. I have had only inadequate opportunities to consult with my associates who are working in other states, so that what I have to say here reflects less the national survey in which all of the information has been carefully organized than it reflects my own experience in recent weeks, in a number of states, including the states in which some of you people are currently working.

Granted, then, that what I have to say is impressionistic and is by no means based on an exhaustive review of data. I shall put my remarks in their most unqualified form for the purpose of provoking you to such indignation and discussion as may develop at this session. Incidentally, I shall test the impressions which I have been collecting by recording them in a rather explicit way for your criticism, and for my own.

The talk which was made by Lowell Martin on the first evening of this conference has made my task here much simpler than it would otherwise be. Out of his much more extensive experience, he has summarized a body of material into a set of conclusions with which, on the basis of my own limited experience, I could not possibly quarrel. It fits my own observations too well.

Ever since the Public Library Inquiry which was carried out by my predecessor in this project, Robert Leigh, who largely shaped the outline which this present project is pursuing, there has been in the minds of people in the library field an awareness both of the weaknesses of existing programs and of desirable directions of future development. I must say that as I travel about, talking with people, my awareness of the depth of thought and the degree of innovation which went into Mr. Leigh's study and its conclusions are increasingly impressive to me. He anticipated a great deal of the development which has taken place in recent years, and his fundamental criticisms are as valid now as they were at the time that his survey was made.

Incorporating, therefore, by reference what has been said by much more experienced and distinguished scholars than I, we might begin by saying that public library service in the

United States is characterized by vast multiplicity of service units, many of which are extremely small in size both in terms of populations which they serve, present budgets, the financial resources of the area which supports the service, and in terms of the size of library staffs. There are considerable areas of the country which are not getting any library service directly, except on a mail-order basis from a state library agency.

Over the years since these criticisms were first made, there has been relatively little change in the number of units, relatively small progress, except recently in New York, in associating these small units into larger systems with larger resources. There is even the threat of increased numbers of units with the spread of urban populations beyond the limits of existing governmental units. Overwhelmingly, as one looks across the country, one sees the coexistence, side by side, of a few very strong municipal systems and some strong county systems in each state, together with vast areas of the state in which there are to be found only the smallest of units and the smallest scale of financial support. Indeed, it was not until I began this state library survey that I appreciated the minute scale on which these so-called libraries operate. Whether one can call an institution a library which is open 45 minutes a week or two hours a week is a debatable question. Certainly the picture which most of us have of a public library scarcely admits the extension of this term to such very limited operations. Yet in state after state, taking the number of units alone, and not considering populations served, one would find anywhere from one-third to two-thirds of the units which have budgets of a few hundred dollars a year, no trained staff, a book stock of a few thousand largely obsolete titles, and no more than a few hours of service a week.

In assessing the general situation of the public library, we should also be aware that the users of the library have been described as being to a very large degree children, women, and others who presumably are not too much a part of the serious world and whose influence in securing funds may be more limited than that of other groups within the society. Finally, we should note that a good part of the uses of all public libraries has been in the area of relatively undemanding recreational needs. This is, of course, much more characteristic of very small units than it is of our larger municipal libraries. In all these respects, we clearly have a general picture of library development in the country with which we have no particular right to be satisfied. The questions which I am going to raise today bear on the extent to which the Library Services Act has been



an adequate instrument for achieving the purposes which librarians in general, especially those interested in public libraries, have in mind for the future in the United States.

Before I begin this part of the discussion, let me say a few words about the adoption of the Library Services Act as an accomplishment of the organized library profession. One of the criticisms which <sup>19</sup>are made in earlier studies, such as Leigh's, a criticism supported by superficial contact with people in the library world, is that libraries have been far too remote from the active processes of decision within the political and governmental units of which they are a part. This comment is made by many state librarians in reporting the activities and the attitudes of librarians and library trustees in local units in their own states. The picture which one has of the library as a quiet, secluded place for study, for scholarship, or for the pursuit of the arts and sciences is not one in which the frantic competitive world of politics seems to have much part. However, anyone who has read the hearings, as I have, of the Subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee, which held hearings on the original Library Services Act and on its extension last year, will get a striking impression of the competence of the library profession in lobbying and in deploying political forces in a competitive situation. The skill exhibited on those occasions would be remarkable for any of the many far more experienced groups who are in the business of influencing governmental policy in the United States.

Mrs. Currier of Mississippi and Miss Krettek of the ALA Washington Office have been telling me at lunch something of the further background which went into the passage of that Act. I have read a good many Congressional hearings and followed secondhand through the Congressional Record a number of battles over new legislation. I think I have never seen such a display of sheer technical mastery as evidenced in these Library Services Act hearings. Quite clearly, the preparation and briefing of witnesses had been worked out to the last possible degree. The persons chosen were chosen magnificently well to represent a particular segment of society, to represent stages of state development in the provision of library service, to appeal to the members of Congress to whom they were speaking in terms of their acceptability as exponents and representatives of very highly cherished interests in American life. Their statements were pithy and to the point, and it seemed to me to be the ultimate triumph that, at the hearings on the extension of the Act, over 30 members of Congress testified before the committee in favor of its extension. This is political



skill of a really remarkable order which, again, can be equaled by very few professions in the United States.

So we have something of a paradox. At the local level, libraries and librarians often seem to be unsure and somewhat inept in finding support and reaching the interested public, and in moving the offices of government to give them a reasonable allocation of local resources. At the national level, where in general the competition to determine legislative and administrative action is far more highly developed, where there are persons of the highest skill able to employ very great sanctions in their efforts to influence legislative and administrative action--at this level, which is the supreme test of one's political competence and know-how, the American Library Association and the library profession have produced practitioners as skillful as any that there are.

Of course, this display of interest in and support of library service was accomplished not alone by the direct action of people in Washington. The people in Washington were supported by state libraries and local librarians, in all parts of the country, who stirred up influential persons to make representations to their own Congressional delegations. The whole campaign was conducted with what seems to me to be a miracle of logistic skill, getting the right person in the right place with the right statement at the right time. Again, just as in outlining some of the current deficiencies in the library scene, I introduce this high accomplishment in the political arena for the sake of perspective, so that we can see not only what libraries and librarians are omitting to do in some matters, but how supremely well they have done in some other matters.

The only regret that I have in telling this part of the story is that it leads to the question of what was accomplished by this very great effort. As one looks at the Library Services Act itself, its provisions are by no means entirely worthy of the skill and the dedication and the statesmanship which went into its creation. In the first place, the sums of money which are thus made available for the support of library services in the state are relatively minor considering the whole scale of the national budget, considering the whole scale of the expenditures on the public library in the United States. This was a mere trickle of money to put into a field which is capable of really very considerable development.

In the second place, the Act as written and as renewed carries a limitation that library services are to be supported by federal grants only as they are available to populations of communities of 10,000 or less. Considering the long, drawn-

out effort to create a public awareness of the great need for larger areas with larger populations, with larger financial resources, to concentrate this new money and this new effort on the least profitable units in the country, units which are incapable in the long run of providing what anyone in the library field would regard as adequate service, is most unfortunate.

In the third place, the Act at adoption was temporary, was, of course, extended with rather evasive remarks about the extent to which, despite great accomplishments, it had not attained its objectives. I suppose I have no doubt that it will be extended again, and extended without difficulty. Enactment on a temporary basis was, however, very far from representing the kind of forthright commitment to participate in library affairs, financially and otherwise, which one might well expect from a level of government which has committed considerable sums into other areas of cultural and educational development.

Finally, in reviewing briefly the character and status of the Library Services Act, I should note that small as the total sum to be distributed was, limited as the purposes were which could be directly supported by the grants made available, these small grants, nevertheless, have virtually doubled the appropriation of a good many state library agencies in the United States, a fact which only underlines how thoroughly inadequate the state support of these activities has been and still is. The efforts which librarians have been making in our several states to have state budgets increased against that time when the Library Services fund may not be available have been largely unsuccessful. There have been only one or two librarians who have had in the last round of appropriations some limited acceptance of their purpose of becoming independent of federal funds in the future.

I will save until later my appreciation of the skill and ingenuity with which the staff of the Library Services Branch has administered what is apparently a rather cumbersome act. For the moment, let us simply note the great contrast between that which the Act provides and that which the library profession has held to be desirable trends and standards of development.

As Lowell Martin said so pungently in his opening talk, one of the activities regrettably supported by the Library Services funds is the demonstration of library service at wholly inadequate levels. We are organizing library demonstrations which consist of putting expanded book collections into a particular location, or putting into the operation trained persons,

recruited and paid by the state, who would otherwise have been unavailable locally.

With fifty thousand dollars' worth of books and a fifteen-thousand-dollar bookmobile as a dowry, these marriages of local units into larger service areas are being supported by state funds with a level of local participation which is not even close to a respectable fraction of the long-term costs of service. In Missouri, for example, the several regional libraries which have been organized are supported by a one-mill tax which will never yield sufficient revenue to support the present level of operation if state funds are withdrawn. Most of the regional units or the county units (which are the largest areas some states are able to achieve) have but one trained librarian on their staffs who must handle every responsible activity from book selection to negotiating with county budget authorities.

In a number of cases, the basic service being demonstrated is bookmobile service, whether administered by local units, state-supported regional centers, or the state agency itself. Bookmobile service, incidentally, provided a considerable part of the eloquent testimony which was given in support of the extension of the Library Services Act in 1960.

Bookmobile service is indispensable in some situations. Its limitations do not need to be stated in detail by an amateur like me. In bookmobile service, the amount of material which can be displayed at any time is acutely limited. Bookmobile stops may be for as short a period as 10 or 15 minutes in some of the less populated locations. What opportunity is there under these circumstances for readers to get careful advice on the materials which might be available in their field of interest? What opportunity is there to develop a reference service of any depth or any sophistication? The book collections, which are magnificent improvements over the obsolete, dusty, battered materials which all too often passed for libraries in library collections in too many locations in too many of our states, at best consist of a few thousand volumes selected from the current publishers' output to meet some sort of middle level of reading needs.

Normally, there is heavy emphasis, in the demonstrations supported with Library Services Act funds, on children's books, simply because these are not otherwise available either through the schools or in the homes of children whose parents are likely to be unaware of the possibilities in this very attractive area of publishing. The number of books per person, the amount of time per client the librarian can spend with the using public, the attractiveness of facilities which are available to the

using public--all of these in many of these demonstration operations are well below the standards which we would have thought to be standards of desirable library development. Yet we are attempting to persuade people by these substandard operations that they should lend their support, political and financial, to the provision of services at an expanded level. Is the new service to be at the level of that which is demonstrated? If it is not at the level of service which is demonstrated, how is the public to be reconciled to the greater cost of a satisfactory operation as compared with the cost and the burden of the demonstration which was made to them?

In some cases in these demonstration programs, bookmobiles make school stops simply because they reach large numbers of users and because the schools are often used as a channel of communication between those promoting community services and members of the community. And yet, if the experiment is successful and the new unit is transferred to local support, the professional staff of the unit would very quickly withdraw the service which was previously provided through the school stops, since among the canons of proper operation is the canon of not doing for the schools that which the schools can do for themselves. The current dogma is that public library resources must not be used for classroom work, must be used as little as possible for supplementary reading during school hours.

Finally, it seems to me, in reviewing what happens to the Library Services Act money, that the cost is being concealed. As we have said, staff, equipment, book collections are being provided to people in segments of the state with no realistic indication of what the upkeep costs of this kind of enterprise are likely to be on a long-term basis, when it is not a matter of merely providing for minimum needs over a relatively short period of time with no--or virtually no--capital outlay.

This is true in state as well as local operations. Our states are being permitted to make an appropriation of \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year to a state library agency which is able, with matching federal grants, to operate what is often a most impressive program. Clearly, the people of the state are not paying for this program in any direct way. Clearly, neither budget officers nor governors nor legislators are facing up to the cost of what these services will be. The critical decisions, therefore, which in the long run have to be faced, of what we are willing to pay for, who is going to pay for it--these critical decisions are being postponed, evaded in a general glow of good



will which is made possible because apparently free money is being fed into state and local operations. This is the black side of the Library Services Act. I think that it has to be stated bluntly because this Act is the major legislative accomplishment of the people interested in public libraries in the United States. In the sense of achievement which has come with that victory, we cannot afford to ignore the very limited front on which the victory was won, nor the disparity between what was won and the kind of program which will accomplish the previously stated long-run objectives for library service in the United States.

I shall be able to say nicer things about the Library Services Act program when I discuss my impressions of its administration. For the moment, however, I want to raise the question of whether the members of the library profession made the right decision when they decided to go to the federal government in an effort to increase the funds available for library programs. In raising this question, I am not thinking of the usual criticisms of federal aid programs.

I am not persuaded that they restrict local initiative; that they force local decisions in particular directions to nearly that degree which is urged by their critics. On the other hand, looking at the direction of national expenditure, at the direction of state expenditure, and at the direction of local expenditure, one finds that the thing which stands out in the United States is that the great and solid base of support for educational and cultural activity generally is not the federal government with its vast budget, its many billions of income and outgo; rather, it is the state governments which have increased their total expenditure--not so fast as the national government, but extremely fast--and have increased it above all in the areas of education and of cultural activity, areas in which federal expenditure is virtually trifling. The expenditures of the federal government in all the fields of education are impressive. They run to some billions, but, taking them apart, one finds that always there is a specific purpose which is being supported to the exclusion of more general purposes and a more general program. Congress has invariably attached a very specific set of conditions to its grants for educational purposes. There are grants for vocational education, the training of vocational educational teachers, the training of teachers in mathematics and science. There are contracts for specific kinds of research which are approved and developed by the agencies which have the funds to spend. There are also aggressions against individual conscience such as the "disclaimer affidavits" required of those who get fellowships under the National Defense Educa-



tion Act.

By contrast, the states in their dealings with higher education have been extraordinarily generous. The staffs of the universities and colleges have been free to develop programs which they thought educationally most significant. The institutions which started out with rather limited purposes, such as training schools for persons in agriculture and industry, have become great institutions, both graduate and undergraduate, supporting the most abstruse kind of research in science and in the humanities. If one looks at the simultaneous expansion of state support for higher education and for public elementary and secondary education, one cannot but be impressed at the flexibility of the state revenue system and the willingness of state governments, state officers, and state populations to devote very large resources to the business of education. This expansion has also come at a time when there are great other burdens on the states, particularly in the field of general public welfare, of mental health, and of highway construction. In general, then, one has the impression that for a long-term and relatively unrestricted support of educational and cultural activity, the states are more promising than the federal government.

Our reservations about the long-run reliability of the federal government as a source of support for library services are the more distressing since the job that is to be done is such a large one. The existing units of library service are small not only in terms of yesterday's needs. They grow smaller day by day. Tied to local support as library service is, the limits of the property tax limit the possibilities of the library budget. In far too many sections of our states, the maximum available tax in the largest unit of rural government, the county, yields too little money to pay the salary of a single trained librarian. Even in terms of population, many counties are much too small units to provide a clientele of adequate size for any but the shallowest kind of service. However, the belief of the leaders of library thought is that we must provide a more complicated kind of service, that is to say that we must be able to meet more specialized needs of a group of readers, more inclusive in terms of the total structure of society, than we have previously been reaching. We are driven to do this by the changes in the character of the information which is available in any field of interest, whether for pleasure or profit, and by the higher educational level of the population which must mean in turn that their requirements are higher than those of our reading population in the past.

Finally, we are asked to believe that library service is not merely a matter of having somewhere in the stacks or in the file cabinet information of an appropriate type. It must also be available quickly in a form in which it can be used. The library staff must include people who know specialized materials well enough so that they can render effective service to readers and users in locating it, even perhaps abstracting it and organizing it to suit the users' needs.

The library then takes its place among the informational resources of the community. It is perhaps the informational resource par excellence in that it is not limited to any particular type of use or any particular class of users, but attempts to reach all types of use and all classes of users.

If we set this as our goal, then very clearly what we were saying earlier about the size of the potential public for any given library outlet is critical. The appropriate size becomes of a wholly different order than that which might have been appropriate size for simpler purposes and less demanding uses of the past.

Another requirement which one finds widely stated in current library discussion is the need to take advantage of the technical facilities which are currently available for installing information, for retrieving information, for rapid copying of scarce material, for the transmission of information over long distances, and the like. Some very brave things have been said about the ways in which the libraries of the future may be mechanized with electronic and mechanical equipment so as to make more continuously available their vast resources and to make them available at a distance as easily as they are available to the person in the reading room or at the reference desk.

Quite clearly, we are thinking in these terms of far larger organizations than are current in the public library field today. We cannot begin to employ such complicated equipment; we cannot begin to recruit the necessary staffs to operate it unless we are dealing with very high volumes of use. The total budget for any one of these enterprises would be of a very impressive order, and it would have to be spread over a very large using public and over a considerably expanded financial base.

We should clearly be interested that our ideal state of development reach all parts of the population, in all the geographic areas of the country. We have already indicated that the extent of unserved areas in the United States is very uncomfortable in a country so urban, so industrial, with such high income levels. The factor of the sparse distribution of the pop-

ulation of some areas of the country is not likely to change. If anything, it is being exaggerated, by movement out of the open countryside and into the middle-sized towns. We are not likely to have depopulated areas, but only more thinly populated areas. At the same time, we shall have, in the metropolitan concentrations, a multiplicity of local government units of various types whose coordination has baffled all of the professional planners, and baffled those who would take local political leadership in an attempt to reduce the confusion of metropolitan government to a more rational structure.

Finally, in our discouraging inventory, one of the acute problems which affects every library administrator is the shortage of staff, the inadequacy of the present library training institutions to train enough qualified people to man the posts which are open, and the inability to recruit sufficient students to utilize fully the training facilities which do exist. Considering that this staff problem is really one of the very great problems of libraries apart from any question of reorganization or extension of local library services, considering that staff needs are cumulative and constitute a major handicap in program-to-program development, we must ask whether any steps in the development of library legislation are defensible which do not include some attention to staff development and to staff recruitment.

By these standards, what have we gained by the Library Services Act? On the surface, at least, the Act, with its limitation on population, tends to bolster existing units already too small for adequate service. These units are not capable of providing service within their present areas; they are certainly incapable of providing leadership for the extension of service in the areas around them. Another possible consequence in any expansion of the funds for library services is to make it possible for new units to organize which are destined by the character of their initial organization, the laws under which they operate, and the support which brought them into being, to be inadequate units again incapable of providing library service of the imaginative kind which we have been discussing.

In very few of our states is there any kind of birth control for new library units. State legislatures have been chary in granting any sort of discretionary authority over local government to any state agencies. They have apparently been most reluctant to grant such discretionary control over library organization. Yet, if the library laws, permissive as they are, let such units be organized, the state library agencies can scarcely withhold from them the supports they are giving to



other existing units, and the result is the further dissipation of resources and the perpetuation of a system of operation which is inadequate for contemporary conditions.

One of the uses to which Library Services Act money has been put is, of course, to buy books, to buy books which would have been beyond the wildest dreams of library staffs, both state and local, in many of our states until four or five years ago. The book funds of some state agencies have been multiplied many times by Library Services Act funds. These funds, made available in one form or another to local units, have, in turn, permitted manifold expansion of book budgets over what these previously had been. Until he engages in an enterprise of this kind, an outsider like myself is ignorant of the existence of libraries where a book budget may be \$20 a year, \$40 a year, \$60 a year, \$600 a year. That one should attempt, out of all the vast wealth of published material available today, to make a sampling with these minute amounts of money is inconceivable. These funds, therefore, have certainly been one of the great blessings of the Library Services Act for those agencies and for those local library units which have been able to take advantage of them. What can we say about the book purchases which have thus far been made possible? In some situations, in some states, the expenditure of money has brought the collection of the state library covering the population of an entire state up to about the level one might expect of a branch library in a middle-sized city, certainly no more deep in terms of the range of subjects and different kinds of interests which are represented in the collection. Expended on the local level either directly or indirectly, these book funds have, of course, gone to provide the most elementary tools, juvenile books of a decent kind, not the nineteenth-century sub-classics; minimal reference services, such as the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the unabridged dictionary, the Encyclopedia Americana, or, at the juvenile level, Collier's Encyclopedia. That these are victories and accomplishments is only an indication of the poverty which so largely obtained before these victories were won.

Having devoted so much space to the limitations of the library programs of the several states, despite the increased financing that the Library Services Act has made possible, let us look now at more cheerful things. One of these cheerful things is the Library Services Branch staff of the U. S. Office of Education, who are, I say it to their faces, a most ingratiating group of people.

The creation of staffs able and willing to work with state and local people is one of the real accomplishments of all federal

grant programs. The federal staffs, I think, are always utterly disarming. They are people of confidence and good will, of energy and dedication to their jobs, who are able to be of enormous assistance to the harassed state and local personnel in meeting various demands which are made upon them. There are some advantages which these people in federal agencies have over their counterparts in state and local government. They are considerably more detached both from the pressures of day-to-day operations which limit perspective and which tend to diminish invention and innovation, and from the persistent pressures of the various individuals, parties, or organized interests who are seeking to dictate the development of programs and the details of decision in individual cases. To have these people as a reservoir of information, advice, and counsel, of detached evaluation of the situation, is a great gain for those involved in state programs.

I am also impressed that this particular staff has administered the awkward Act with which they have to deal with a minimum of interference in state program-making and a minimum of restraint upon the sometimes devious expedients which state people must use in order to comply at once with the realities of their local situation and with the requirements of the federal Act. They have been extremely flexible about the allocation of costs by state authorities as matching funds under the Library Services Act. They have supported and built up the state staffs and state book collections and provided equipment, all of which have undoubtedly been of great service to the so-called rural areas, the particular province of the Library Services Act, but which are also available for part of the time for the benefit of the rest of the state. They have required a minimum of account-keeping and bookkeeping in order to permit the requirements of the Act to be met. Even the federal auditors, who in other programs can be extremely embarrassing in the questions which they ask after the fact about the handling of funds, have been understanding of the difficulties which the states meet in operating their programs, and have been willing to show considerable trust in the good will, the competence, and the integrity of the state officials in several agencies.

The Library Services Act money, aided by the professional support available through the Library Services Branch staff, has served to invigorate many of the state agencies which had previously been working along, year after year, with a substantially uniform level of appropriations despite an ever increasing cost of goods and services. The new money which



has come into these agencies has both permitted expanded staffs and given the present staffs the possibility of accomplishment, the chance of developing new programs, the excitement of moving out to new areas of service in their states. In consequence, some of the people have been able to build a new source of support, to get substantially increased appropriations, and this same increased support has been reflected in the local units in many of the states. To this extent, the Act has fulfilled one of the general purposes of those grants-in-aid programs, namely to concentrate more local support into the aided programs. Since the future development of library services in a state is likely to depend considerably more upon the energy and capacity of staffs at the state level, this new life for the state agencies is more than significant as an achievement of the Library Services Act.

Another aspect of the Library Services Act which is certainly an unqualified benefit is that it has provided money for experiment and innovation which would not ordinarily have been available from state sources. One of the unfortunate aspects of state finance is that money is appropriated for very particular purposes and that the possibility of innovation is checked by the disposition to base expenditure grants upon the previously prevailing levels and objects of expenditure. By contrast, federal grant money is relatively free. It need not be justified for expenditure in quite the same elaborate way that state appropriations must be. It is available not only to carry out existing programs, but to plan innovations and development. Those people in the states, therefore, who have had ingenuity and imagination--and there are many of them--have been able to use the federal money for experiments in modes of operation and types of programs which might be more rewarding than those which have been used in the past.

This characteristic of federal money in being relatively flexible in the purposes and ways in which it can be spent is one of the great advantages which have attended some other federal grants as well. For example, one of the limitations which one frequently encounters in state finance is a flat prohibition against spending state money for salary and expenses of people in various kinds of training programs--formal training programs, that is, which require extended absence from the job and enrollment in schools sometimes out of the state. By contrast, a portion of Library Services Act money has been spent for training purposes in many states and for scholarships for both present and prospective staff, and has to that extent both enabled the states to experiment with these different pro-

grams and added to the supply of persons who are available for such scholarships. This characteristic, I might say, of the Library Services Act money is shared with most federal programs. In a number of other fields, such as child welfare and training of public health personnel, the federal government has made money available which was normally not available from the state service.

Finally, the new money available under the Library Services Act has provided in the federal government itself a center for the collection and dissemination of information which is of very considerable importance in the evolution of library programs. This is one of the most ancient functions of federal agencies in relation to state, local, and even private agencies. The national government has, for over a century, been a collector of data in a variety of fields of endeavor and has provided carefully assembled information by which other governments and other agencies could plan their work and evaluate their activity. That this activity is now being carried on in the library field, a field which is characterized by fairly small units of operation, with information consequently difficult to secure and tabulate, is of very considerable importance, just as it has been important for a very long time in the general field of education. Undoubtedly as time goes by and the federal people become more skilled in the collection of data, their services in this respect will be of even more value to us.

In summary, therefore, one must admit that with all of its shortcomings as a legislative enterprise, the Library Services Act has achieved a considerable increase in assets, in personnel, in organization, and in finances that are available for library service in the United States. To return, however, to our starting point, there is nothing in the present Act which substantially or fundamentally changes the situation with respect to that library service. The reorganization of local service units is made no easier by the availability of demonstration funds under the Library Services Act than it was before that Act came into existence. The resistance to state coordination and control of local units may have been alleviated somewhat by the increased frequency with which the augmented state staffs have been in contact with personnel of local library units. However, the antipathy to losing one's identity in a larger organization has not diminished, nor has the habit of using the library as a sort of housekeeping game for many amateurs on boards of trustees and library staffs. The size of appropriations, although substantial in the light of miserable appropriations once available through many state agencies, is still quite inconsiderable

even in the best-supported state agencies. The big job, then, still remains to be done.

So far an enormous amount of the talent and skill of state staffs has been devoted to attempting to improve the library service provided through very small units by untrained or partly trained staffs. In fact, in some states the extension staff are virtually the professional staff of many local units. One of the reflections which occur to the outside observer as he moves about through the states is whether library service could not more easily be provided directly by the state than indirectly provided through state action in cooperation with local units. Is that not just what is being done in some of the states, such as New York, which have achieved a reputation for a considerable reorganization of local service? What New York has done, in effect, is to provide a new layer of library service on a so-called regional basis paid for entirely with state funds. The price of the additional resources made available to existing service units is their entering into cooperative agreements among themselves and with the libraries at the new regional centers. Financing of the new regional center, however, is entirely state financing. Instead of a direct contact between the local library staff and the state library in the capital, what you have is direct contact between local staffs and state regional staffs. In other words, for all practical purposes, the need for increased size of staffs and resources for the population served is being met rather by the reorganization of state service than by drastic change in the character of local units.

I think that we would be fooling ourselves, we would be inadequate to our duty, if we did not recognize that the great problem is before us; it is to secure a degree of public awareness of, support for, and willingness to pay the bills of a public library service which does not exist except perhaps in a few places at the present time. It would seem that what we ought to be doing is building up a kind of awareness which would make problems of structural organization relatively minor problems. When there is enough enthusiasm for the service, then the opposition of those who are currently active in and beneficiaries of the many small local enterprises will be insignificant and can be overcome. The most promising road, that of building around the strong units which already exist in our states, will be open. Admittedly, some states are much more fortunate than others in having strong municipal or county libraries scattered strategically all over the state. Those without them are the ones who will have to go to direct state operation of the intermediate levels.

So far the efforts to associate strong local units with many small units in the hinterland about them have been relatively unsuccessful, with the possible exception of New York and the further possible exception of Pennsylvania under its new program. Does not a solution perhaps lie in a far closer association between the state library and the municipal libraries in the development of expanded service areas whereby resources of income and staff are concentrated in the large units and made available to the sparsely populated countryside through whatever the most effective devices are, whether these are stations, branch offices, bookmobiles, or what have you? Again, the whole design of the Library Services Act tends to obstruct this enterprise if we are to construe "aid to communities of 10,000 or under" in its strictest terms. As the Act stands, one has to do some pretty elaborate bookkeeping and explaining to justify the necessary expenditure for building up the large units to the point where they may be able to extend their service to the less populated areas surrounding them. It is also worth noting that relations between municipal libraries, especially the large ones, and the state library agencies are not always either close or cordial. If there is not hostility, there can be a very large measure of indifference. In a few states, one is aware of common planning behavior for several types of libraries through the development of committees of state library associations. This is one of the more hopeful elements in the developing future.

In conclusion, then, the Library Services Act must be viewed as a very great landmark indeed in terms of what previously had been done by the library profession to secure increased support and public recognition of the value of public libraries as cultural and educational institutions. In terms of its fitness to the particulars of the situation which faces us, it seems in many ways a badly designed instrument. The great job of extending the awareness of the significance of library service, the role of developing library service to the point at which it intersects the needs of more individuals, more groups, and more activities within the community, remains to be done. When we are able to get the increased public awareness of what the library is, what the library can do, what the library is doing, then, I think, we shall be able to overcome the limitations of finance, of jurisdiction and organization, of administrative structure which at present hinder us. For the benefit of this audience, let me repeat once more that one of the firm convictions which I carry away from my study so far, an impression which I expect to survive the completion of the study, is that



the state library agency, however it may be organized, has the key role to play in the whole development of the public library program. I think that the prospects for the future can be measured in part by the strength and the degree of public support for the development and extension of the state agency programs. I should also like to repeat my impressions of the devotion to duty, of the enthusiasm and the sheer good nature of the many people who are on the staffs of these agencies who have been my hosts in many places and for whom I have the warmest feelings. I carried away from all of my visits the feeling that there is excellent work done by many people who get very little recognition outside their own immediate group of co-workers. This probably in the end is the strongest asset which the state library has. The state library agency, in turn, is one of the very strong assets in the whole developing picture of library service in the United States. The Library Services Act may have had its most fruitful impact in its strengthening the resources of and the public awareness of this agency.



## SUMMARY

Harold Lancour

It is customary at Allerton Park conferences for one of the members of the faculty or the staff to give a summary of what transpired, and this time this happened to be my job. You can well understand that this isn't a very enviable position. In the first place, you have to go to every one of the meetings to hear what takes place. Also, you have to stay awake at the meetings you attend, which sometimes is a little difficult. Then you get up and try to tell the people, who are intelligent, and who went to the meetings and stayed awake, what they heard, when they already have a pretty good notion of what they heard anyway. As a result, a summary like this satisfies absolutely no one. Half of the people will wonder where in the world you heard what you say you heard, because they didn't hear it, and the other half will wonder why in the world you didn't hear what they heard. Nevertheless, we have this little device, and this is like a social institution--once we have it, we can't get rid of it, and I suppose we'll go on forever having these summaries.

It was apparent from the outset that this group was different from many groups that have arrived at Allerton Park. They were experienced conferees. They had been going to conferences for a long time, they had actually many times been at conferences together--because the state librarians get together in an organization--and they had met on several occasions in respect to the Library Services Act. Consequently, in a way more was expected of them than might have been expected of a less sophisticated group. And they responded. They responded well and they responded quite accurately.

Anyway, 67 hours and 30 ducks ago--but I'll have to explain the ducks. There is a big duck farm near Allerton, and so one of the meals at each Institute is duckling which we get

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from the local farm, and that's the special meal of the conference. Anyway, 67 hours, 30 ducks, 740 pancakes, 1,123 cups of coffee, and one cocktail party ago, the conference started. We came together with the purpose of taking a hard look at the Library Services Act, what it has meant, and hopefully what it might mean in the future.

The first thing to be done at the conference--and actually, things don't always happen in exactly the way in which they are reported in the summary: something that really belongs at the beginning of the Institute, or at the beginning of the whole intellectual process of the Institute, might have happened near the end of it; but still, as you look back on it, you realize that this was the first part. So what I give here is not actually chronological, but I think it's more or less the way an idea was developed. The first thing that was done was to look back at the first five years, and as the conferees looked back, they found it good.

There were all kinds of statistics to prove that the Library Services Act has made a magnificent contribution to the development of public libraries in this country. Statistics were provided to show that some 36 million people now either have library service for the first time or have library service which is greatly improved as a result of the first five years of the Library Services Act. Some 1,500 counties have benefited. We also learned that the state agencies have been greatly strengthened as a result of LSA. For example, some 800 new people have been added to the staffs of these agencies who could never have been hired without this additional money. Some of these were professional people, and some, of course, were clerical workers and bookmobile drivers. A total of 288 bookmobiles have been purchased from LSA funds and are now in use by public libraries all over the country. One can quickly see, in this somewhat dramatic way, how much this direct help would mean to public library development.

Also, there have been a strengthening of the idea of libraries, a better understanding of libraries, and a belief in libraries, as a result of the excitement and activity generated by the money from the Library Services Act. Many people have begun to think about libraries as they have never done before. Library trustees, realizing that many of their long withheld hopes might now be practicable, were brought into the programming for their libraries. There was a high degree of personal involvement by a number of people in library planning throughout the nation.

✓ The state library agencies needed strengthening--badly.

It was brought out in the course of the Institute that some of these agencies represented the weakest part of American librarianship. For various reasons, partly because of political domination, partly because of being out of the general stream of the library profession, and partly because of low salary scales, they had difficulty getting top-grade personnel. Moreover, their total budgets were often inadequate. As a result, many state agencies had not, for the most part, been very successful. There were, of course, some outstanding exceptions.

Because state agencies had often been weak and ineffectual in the past, a number of librarians had blamed them for actually holding back public librarianship in this country 50 years or more. All, it was said, that the state agencies had done, through small contributions and a little low-level guidance to manifestly inadequate libraries, was to nurse along the weak. It would have been far better, it was felt, for these small, so-called libraries to have been discouraged and allowed to wither away.

Well, so much for the state agencies. At the same time that they were being strengthened, so was the Library Services Branch, that department of the federal government under the Office of Education, which for a number of years has conducted a statistics-gathering and an advisory service for public libraries in this country. Under the LSA, the Library Services Branch has been able to enlarge its staff to include specialists in various aspects of librarianship. The revitalized Branch now fulfills a positive and dynamic leadership role.

At this juncture, it looked to the conferees as though the key to all that had happened up to the present time had been money. It was the shot in the arm that came from having \$7.5 million that made all the difference. For the first time, libraries in this country began to feel that they, too, were part of the affluent society. And what a difference it made!

After that rather satisfying look at what had happened, there was an effort to look into the crystal ball a little bit to see what might be ahead, and the general feeling was that this was going to be good, too. For one thing, there were a number of predictions, on the part of those who should know, that the Library Services Act in one form or another is here to stay. It was pointed out that at long last libraries are very popular among the legislators--to be for libraries is like being for motherhood. One is always for libraries, as one is for the church, and the politician is quick to recognize that. The politicians also, in supporting libraries, gain a great deal of good will for

very little expense. After all, they're putting only \$7.5 million a year into it, and they've got back an astonishing amount in the way of tangible results. And then there is the tendency that we mentioned before: social institutions just don't die very easily.

The people who are involved in all this are already planning for the new legislation which will be necessary in 1966, and the planning is pretty well developed, as well as the strategy for its presentation to Congress. The main change in the Library Services Act that they would like to bring about, as reported at the Institute, is that, instead of being limited just to rural areas, any new legislation would call for the improvement of library services throughout the United States, including urban areas as well as rural. However, Congress is notably rural-minded, and any hope for including urban areas under the Act may be misplaced; the Act will likely be simply a continuation of rural support for some time to come.

There already is evidence that other funds for libraries, in addition to those from LSA, will be forthcoming. For example, in the education bill which did not pass but went a long way in the last Congress, \$47.5 million was provided for the improvement of libraries in schools, colleges, and universities. This had been fully approved in committee. It is very likely, then, that in an act of a similar nature in the next Congress, or a couple of Congresses from now, there will be a substantial amount of money for library improvement.

Well, so much for the two looks--backward, which was good, and forward, which was optimistic. But over everybody at Allerton there were hanging some rather nagging doubts about what really had taken place during the last five years. It was felt that there were a lot of questions and a lot of problems that we really didn't get at--we kind of ran up to them, but then waltzed back.

For example, someone asked, "Have we gained only superficial results during the past five years?" To be sure, 288 new bookmobiles sounded very impressive and could be proudly described. But, as someone said, "288 bookmobiles for what?" These bookmobiles, it was pointed out, simply use the public roads to bring substandard library service to local areas, instead of doing, as was suggested, what business and industry and the schools are doing, using the roads to bring people to services which meet established standards. There was a question as to whether it had been wise to get 288 bookmobiles, only to continue substandard service. Then someone said, "What about the reference books?"--referring to the col-



lections of basic reference sources which have been distributed to the smaller libraries hitherto deficient in these essential materials. And again, the question came back, "Reference books for what?"

In the unvarnished view of Lowell Martin, the effect of the last five years of LSA has been only the continuation of the policy of "fragmentation and convenience" that has dominated American public librarianship for half a century. This policy has fostered small and inadequate fragments of libraries presumably on the theory of making library service convenient to the small group of people who live near each fragment. While one side of the coin showed that through the Library Services Act some progress had been made in creating larger units of service, the other side of the coin showed that the new larger unit was often little more than a combination of a handful of relatively weak libraries. All this did was to provide a combination of weaknesses rather than something that was in itself basically strong and vital.

There was a great deal of talk about demonstration libraries under LSA, where some outside money for extra staff and books would be provided to a local community to demonstrate what library service could mean. Now the idea behind all this is that, if you demonstrate so conclusively to the people who are living there and use the service that this is what they want themselves, then, of course, they will support it. Well, what happened to a disquieting number of the demonstration libraries? It was discovered that when the time came for the people in the area to take the libraries over, they didn't. They simply weren't willing to spend their own money to do it.

Thus, you can see that the group had some rather harsh and unpalatable thoughts about themselves which they were willing to talk about. Then someone from outside librarianship came along and confirmed just about all the depressing things we had been saying about ourselves. The outsider was Professor Phillip Monypenny, who is now carrying out a major survey of state library agencies all over the country. Mr. Monypenny pulled no punches as he told us what he had discovered. First, he observed that librarians had developed a superb political technique in getting the LSA as well as a number of state legislative proposals enacted, but he added, "Look how little you've gained for all this activity and all this energy!" Then he contrasted what the public libraries have been able to get for their support with what is regularly expended on public highways, mental institutions, and nearly every other publicly-supported facility. It has been relatively but a drop in the bucket. He



remarked that state library budgets are to him astonishingly and appallingly low and that the range of services which they have set up under these budgets is equally inadequate. He had also taken a good hard look at the demonstration projects. He pointed out that they don't show what is realistically possible to a group of people in the community and suggested that this is one of the reasons why, in many instances, they have not fulfilled their purpose. He further observed that the state libraries are simply engaged in holding the hands of some small units that never should have been allowed to continue anyway. And as he looked at the paths which librarians have chosen to follow in carrying out their work, it looked to him as if they could not be very productive ones. This was a shattering blow to all assembled, as you can well imagine.

After reflecting along these lines, the group began to be willing to verbalize and indicate that actually, money by itself is not enough. They concluded that, in the first place, they have to have people: good personnel is the most important element in the success of a library program. There have been some efforts toward enlarging and upgrading the supply of trained librarians. New personnel have been added to the various agencies already. Scholarship programs utilizing LSA funds have been developing rapidly; many new scholarship proposals are underway. It was abundantly clear that, if the opportunity available because of the LSA were to come to fruition, the profession as a whole has a considerable responsibility to recruit and train the necessary personnel.

The personnel required, the group realized after the experience of the last five years, must be creative and imaginative to an unusual degree. The opportunities of modern librarianship cannot be fulfilled with old, outgrown, and outmoded techniques. New ways of doing things that heretofore have not even been thought about will be needed. Many of the group emphasized the need for effective planning; others underscored the need for research in the future development of librarianship. Up to the present time, most of the things which have been accomplished were done on the basis of guesses or hunches or the fact that Joe Smith has been successful with this or that idea over in Iowa, so let us try it too.

By research the conferees did not mean surveys, important as these are, not just reports on the "status quo," but experimental studies of the fundamental aspects of librarianship. Some speakers pointed out that research is the lifeblood of industry, that our commerce simply couldn't continue without the new ideas which are the result of research. By the

same token, if the new librarianship is going to have its new techniques, new devices, and new concepts, this calls for research based upon bold and imaginative experimentation.

During the next five years, it's just possible that the state agencies are going to emerge from the somewhat passive role that they have had in the past, that they will become initiators instead of suggestors. As one of the state librarians dramatically said, "It is necessary for us in the future to lead by action, and not try to lead by indirection."

The group were united in their call for a stronger federal Library Services Branch. This amounted virtually to a mandate. The officials of the Library Services Branch themselves recognized the necessity of changing their own configuration to become a statistics-gathering, fact-finding, research-pursuing, fund-securing, and administering body. This they already are in part. But they intend to intensify, extend, and deepen their efforts and activities.

In conclusion, then, we could really say that the past half-decade has been exciting and stimulating, and the accomplishments certainly marked. It was quickly acknowledged that one reason they were so marked was because the starting point was so low; anything that was done was bound to stand out. Nevertheless, they were accomplishments. It was agreed that the next five years can be just as exciting, if less hysterically and stridently so; just as stimulating, if perhaps not quite so heady as the years past had been; and just as rich in accomplishment, for it would be the accomplishment of maturity. As one of the speakers said, "Surely you are at the beginning of a new era," and I think the group agreed. The only thing was-- could they meet the challenge to make it truly a new era?

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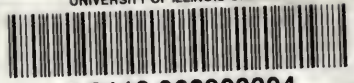








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